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TITANIC $5.2-BILLION DEAL WILL KEEP NHL MULTIMEDIA RIGHTS IN ROGERS' HANDS FOR NEXT 12 YEARS PAGE 24

Greed makes Shannon shed oily black tears

In which Kyle's life decisions take their toll on the temp PAGE 25

New mothers still cared for by ancient art

Demand for traditional Chinese doulas, known as "yue-sao," far outstrips supply in Canada PAGE 6

Feds stuck in Netscape era: AG

Dial-up days. Report says efforts to improve online services have been stalled since '05

When it comes to providing online services for Canadians, the federal government is trapped in the days of floppy discs, a new report says.

In an era when Canadians do their shopping and banking from their computer, Ottawa's online offerings are badly dated, auditor general Michael Ferguson says.

In a report released Tuesday, Ferguson highlights how efforts to improve online services for Canadians have been stalled since 2005, the date of the government's last big initiative on this front.

"There is no government-wide strategy for delivering services online," he wrote.

He cited the case of a veteran wishing to handle his benefits and taxes online, who'd be required to follow different enrolment procedures for three separate government departments.

And he noted how making a change of address can require an individual to advise each department separately — and in some cases, individual programs within the same department.

He noted that while 98 per cent of employment-insurance applications are filed online, applicants cannot determine the status of their claim online. Applications for other benefit programs, such as Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security, cannot be fully completed online.

Since the Conservatives took power in 2006, there has been no requirement for federal departments to report on the number of services offered online or how widely individuals and businesses were using the services.

Ferguson suggests there are significant savings to be had. The report cites 2011 figures that pegged the cost of in-person transactions at $28.80, by phone at $11.69 and only $0.13 for online.

"There are no initiatives in place to move in this direction," the report says.

In response, the government said it was working on a strategy that is 16 months away from being ready.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Response

Employment Minister Jason Kenney said in a statement that his department has made several improvements in recent years, such as more convenient sign-in options and making tax slips available online.

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 10

This might change your mind about your greek yogurt.

WIN KEPT JUST OUT OF REACH

Brooklyn Nets forward Kevin Garnett tries to shoot under heavy pressure from Raptors forward Tyler Hansbrough in Toronto on Tuesday. The Raptors rallied late but fell short by a heartbreaking two points. Story, page 39.

FRANK GUNN/ THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Better daycare oversight urged

Interview. Grieving woman wants to avoid a repeat of her daughter's death in an unlicensed business

Quoted

"It's just shocking what's going on in daycares. I could not even think that something like this is going on."
Ekaterina Evtropova

Even though she sometimes wants to wither away from the world, Ekaterina Evtropova refuses. More than four months after the death of her only daughter at an illegal daycare in Vaughan, she remains firm in her calls for greater oversight in Ontario's unlicensed child-care sector.

"I really want to have something change in the daycare system," Evtropova told the Torstar News Service in her first media interview since a summer news conference where she announced she is suing the government and her former daycare provider over the death of her two-year-old daughter, Eva Ravikovich.

"I wake up with Eva and I go to bed with Eva. Every single minute I have her on my mind," she said. "I don't want anything like this to happen to any other child — to any other parents as well."

Evtropova, a 26-year-old nursing student at Ryerson University, said she was startled to read about the unlicensed daycares inspected by the Education Ministry in the year before her child died.

Last Saturday, Torstar reported that the province inspected nearly 300 unlicensed daycare businesses from July 2012 to July 2013. The inspection reports obtained by Torstar detail a series of health and safety concerns, including soggy bedding, unfenced pools and lax supervision — even at daycares deemed legal.

Unlicensed daycares in Ontario aren't subject to mandatory inspections or regulations imposed on licensed child care. They're only visited by ministry officials when someone complains about them and inspectors can only enforce a single rule: No more than five kids under age 10, not including the care provider's own children.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Eva Ravikovich with her parents Ekaterina and Vyacheslav. Eva died at an unlicensed daycare in Vaughan. Her parents are still awaiting news about how she died and whether the government will produce new legislation regarding unlicensed daycare. FACEBOOK

Average winter predicted ahead of first seasonal blast

A man clears snow off his car after a snowfall in Toronto.
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Toronto's first blast of winter was expected to bring up to five centimetres of snow starting Tuesday evening, but heavier amounts of snow were forecast to fall east of the city.

Environment Canada issued a special weather statement for Toronto and the surrounding areas as a low pressure system from the Gulf of Mexico intensified and brought a combination of wet snow and rain.

"It looks like Toronto and the GTA will remain on the western side of this system, so we are expecting some light snow to get going during the late afternoon, early evening hours," according to Geoff Coulson, a meteorologist for Environment Canada.

This year, meteorologists are predicting average winter temperatures with around 80 centimetres of snow, according to the Weather Network's winter outlook released on Tuesday.

"We are expecting near-normal conditions or near-seasonal conditions, both in terms of temperature and precipitation," said Gina Ressler, a meteorologist for the Weather Network.

"I think the idea for this winter is there is going to be a lot of variability, so even though we are expecting things to average out, it is going to come with a lot of ups and downs, a lot of changes in the weather," Ressler said.

She added Toronto has a 50 per cent chance to have a white Christmas. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

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City's 54th homicide of the year. Man charged in mother's stabbing death

Police have charged a 27-year-old Toronto man with second-degree murder in the stabbing death Monday of his mother.

Emergency workers found Janet Williams, 60, suffering stab wounds at her Ronan Avenue home around 3 p.m. on Monday. She was rushed to a local trauma centre where she died of her injuries.

Her son, Neil Williams, was arrested at the home. He faces charges of second-degree murder and appeared in court on Tuesday morning.

Toronto police homicide Det.-Sgt. Terry Browne said investigators are not looking for other suspects. "It's just one of those sad, tragic ones," he said.

Neil Williams is scheduled to return to court on Dec. 5.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

No injuries. Fire crews battle 3-alarm blaze at north-end mechanic shop

Thirty firefighters fought a commercial fire at a mechanic shop north of Highway 401 Tuesday afternoon. The billowing smoke caused a visual distraction for motorists.

Firefighters arrived to find the building at 1991 Wilson Ave., east of Weston Road, fully engulfed in flames; explosions were reported inside the building, said Toronto fire Capt. Adrian Ratushniak, who was on scene.

It was upgraded to a three-alarm fire around 3:30 p.m.

A small group of people were evacuated and there are no reports of injuries.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Fire crews work to douse a fire at the Ontario Engine ReBuilder mechanic shop at 1991 Wilson Ave. on Tuesday. CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

'I can hear you singing with the angels now'

More than $85K in donations raised. Katy Perry pays tribute as T.O. teen who recorded viral-hit cover of Roar succumbs to cancer

Olivia Wise, the 16-year-old with a brain tumour whose performance of Katy Perry's hit song Roar went viral on YouTube, died Monday, her family said. FAMILY PHOTO

In the final months of her life, Toronto teenager Olivia Wise created a legacy that reached around the world and all the way to an A-list pop star.

Wise died Monday, two years after she was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour and six weeks after a video of her singing Katy Perry's Roar was posted on YouTube. "She died peacefully in her home surrounded by the extraordinary love of her family," her cousin, Jeff Kassel, wrote in an email.

In those six weeks, the 16-year-old's video prompted a response from Perry, more than a million views, a response video featuring messages from hundreds of Toronto students, and more than $85,000 in donations to help other young people with cancer.

Wise always loved to sing, and as her condition began to deteriorate, Kassel arranged for her to get some recording time with producer Jon Levine.

The video was originally intended as a keepsake for her family and friends, but quickly took off online — and spread even further once it got a response from Perry.

Even though her condition was fading, she saw the video message and got "a huge kick out of it," Kassel said.

Given the "overwhelming" response, her family has put the song up for sale on iTunes. Proceeds will go to The Liv Wise Fund, which contributes to brain cancer research and support for children with cancer.

Along with Roar on iTunes and CD Baby is a song that Wise wrote when she was 11, called Simple Girl. Sales of that song will also benefit the Liv Wise Fund. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"Olivia Wise, I can hear you singing with the angels now. Your spirit & strength has inspired me & so many others.... May you rest in peace." Tweeted by Katy Perry

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Ancient post-partum care in high demand

Chinese doulas. Agencies and training courses for 'yue-sao' continue to emerge

Part nurse, Chinese medicine practitioner, nanny and caregiver, Sharon Keung has an array of job skills much in demand by new parents in the Chinese-Canadian community.

Chinese-language classified and online ads are forever seeking yue-sao or post-partum doulas who tend to a new mother and her baby's emotional and physical needs for the first month after birth.

The demand is so high that recruitment services for experienced yue-sao have sprung up, and social agencies are starting to offer short-term training programs in Greater Toronto and Vancouver.

A three-day course at Toronto's Chinese Canadian Community Service Centre is so popular that there's a waiting list.

"I have jobs booked solid from November till February," says Keung, who emigrated from Hong Kong in 2009 and has worked as a yue-sao for nine Toronto families since.

What makes the Chinese doulas unique is their adherence to tradition in caring for new mothers and babies: what herbal soups to make to rebuild health, what food and activities to avoid and what customs to abide.

Some of those traditions — a mother bathes with ginger water, for example — are drastically different from western practices.

"They have very specialized training," said Danny Mui, whose company, Merit Home Support Services, offer homemaking, personal support and postpartum care.

"Most Chinese understand the importance of yue-sao. They know if the new mother is well cared for in the first month, even if they were not healthy before, their health will be rebuilt. But good yue-sao are hard to find here."

New parents are keen on following the traditions passed along in China's long civilization, said Mui, who has seven yue-sao working for him, but clients must still book six months ahead of the expected labour.

Spotting the growing market demand, the Chinese Canadian Community Service Centre developed its yue-sao training course in late 2011, taught by seasoned yue-sao, registered nurses, social workers and nutritionists.

The 20 spots for its November course were filled within days and there are 40 people already placed on the waiting list.

Woon-tim Lee, a certified yue-sao from Hong Kong and a course instructor, has more than 10 years of experience, having cared for more than 80 new mothers and babies.

"We work six hours per shift, five days a week. When we are there, we provide personal care to the mother and child. You just go non-stop, bathing them, changing the baby's diaper, helping with the breastfeeding and preparing all these traditional Chinese foods for the mother," Lee said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Growing community

Canada has seen an influx of mainland Chinese immigrants — 33,000 in 2012 alone — with China being the top source country in eight of the last 10 years.

- Many of them, educated and financially established, come from nuclear families under China's one-child policy and are in Canada without their parents, who often remain in China to look after their own parents.

Woon-tim Lee is a certified yue-sao from Hong Kong with more than 10 years of experience. NICHOLAS KEUNG/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canadian shows Magellan how it's done

The Henri Lloyd crew of Canadian skipper Eric Holden — with the champagne bottle in his hands — celebrates after arriving in Albany, Australia, to find they are in first place after Race 4 of the 16-race Clipper Round the World Yacht Race. The Clipper Race teams amateur racers with a veteran skipper to complete the world's longest ocean race, 40,000 miles (64,373 km), with stops in 13 countries over eight legs, all within one year. CONTRIBUTED

Hospital crowdfunding new cancer technology

It's frequently used for producing movies and recording CDs, but a Toronto hospital is hoping the crowdfunding craze will be their ticket to getting potentially life-saving technology out of the lab and into the arms of the people who need it most.

For almost two decades, Dr. Gregory Czarnota, chief of radiation oncology at Sunnybrook Hospital, has been working with Michael Kolios, an associate dean in Ryerson University's faculty of science, on software that could help better manage breast-cancer treatments.

WaveCheck inventors Dr. Gregory Czarnota, left, and professor Michael Kolios. CONTRIBUTED

Time's running out

There are just eight days left to raise more than half of the $96,987 needed to launch an additional trial.

- The goal is to raise $687,950 to launch trials at three world-leading cancer centres: the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Texas, London Health Sciences Centre in London, Ont. and Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto.

WaveCheck adds on to ultrasound machines and determines — in a matter of weeks instead of months — whether chemotherapy is actually working.

The early information could save months of unnecessary, painful treatment since chemotherapy is successful less than 50 per cent of the time in breast cancer patients.

But the more advanced the research got, the more funding dried up. The project was no longer "new and innovative," a category for which there are numerous grants, Czarnota said, but also not quite ready for businesses to invest.

"They say, 'well, that's still science. You finish it and then come to us,'" he said. "So there's sort of a gap in between having the product developed and developing a tool that can be used in a clinic and finishing off the scientific validation."

WaveCheck has been trialled with more than a hundred patients at Sunnybrook, but needs to be used at multiple sites before it can be licensed and offered widely.

But without grants, researchers have been left in application limbo. Ryerson and MaRS Innovation are hoping crowdfunding is the solution. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Smith's segregation 'a form of torture'

Deep psychological damage. Measure not a solution, especially for people with mental health disabilities: Lawyer

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
jessica.smithcross@metronews.ca

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association will be calling for dramatic change in the way Canada's correctional facilities use segregation, calling the current practice "a form of torture."

Lawyer Allison Thornton is scheduled to make the CCLA's submissions Wednesday at the coroner's inquest into the death of 19-year-old Ashley Smith.

Smith had spent more than 11 months in segregation prior to her self-strangulation death in October 2007 at the Grand Valley Institution for Women in Kitchener. The CCLA will be supporting a finding of homicide in the inquest.

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture issued a report finding that 15 days of solitary confinement causes significant and, in some cases, irreparable harm to people, Thornton said. "And (solitary confinement) is effectively what most of these forms of segregation amount to."

"It does incredibly deep psychological damage," said Thornton. "Human beings don't do well in that environment."

There should be absolute prohibition on segregation for people with mental health disabilities, she said. The only acceptable use of segregation would be on a short-term basis for assessment purposes, she said. "There is a some limited use, theoretically, for segregation, but certainly not in the manner it has been used—a management tool for people they don't know what else to do with."

Asked if corrections facilities are prepared to deal with difficult inmates without using segregation, Thornton pointed out that, "There was a point in time where it was widely believed that you couldn't manage a correctional institution without corporal punishment.

"It's too easy to warehouse human beings in a segregation cell rather than do the difficult work of rehabilitation. It needs to be taken away as a way of managing people who they don't know how to manage," she said.

Other countries manage without using segregation, she added.

Thornton said the high-profile Ashley Smith case is not an isolated tragedy and the CCLA is holding out hope the case will bring about change. "There continue to be other women suffering in distressingly similar circumstances," she said.

The Smith inquest is focusing on self-harming female prisoners.

"Women tend to strike within rather than without and most of the correctional model looks at trying to prevent outward violence," she said. "Another very important lesson we hope is learned in this process is that self-harm is not misbehaviour, it's not a security concern to be squelched. It's a red flag that needs to be addressed."

The CCLA will also be asking for improved oversight in corrections, said Thornton.

Guggenheim pieces at AGO

A woman walks by Henri Matisse's The Italian Woman at the Art Gallery of Ontario on Tuesday. The AGO is hosting The Great Upheaval: Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Collection, a series of work that examines how artists reacted to and reflected the tumultuous period from 1910 to 1918. The exhibition runs from Nov. 30 to March 2.

STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Report: Transport Canada rail oversight lacking in key areas

'Significant weaknesses.' Issues include poorly trained inspectors, lack of route knowledge and absence of followup when problems are found

A rail-safety audit completed just days before the deadly July train crash in Lac-Mégantic, Que., found "significant weaknesses" in Transport Canada's oversight of railways.

Those weaknesses include a lack of knowledge of rail routes used to transport dangerous goods, too few safety auditors, poorly trained inspectors and an absence of followup or sanctions when safety problems are found.

"What we identified was that there were weaknesses in all aspects of how Transport Canada is overseeing rail safety systems in the (rail) companies," auditor general Michael Ferguson told a news conference Tuesday.

His report found that only 14 safety audits of Canada's 31 federally regulated railways had been completed in the previous three years — just a quarter of the audits Transport Canada had expected to carry out.

Moreover, "the scope of the department's audits is very limited," stated the report.

And eight of those 14 audits focused on just the two largest operators, CN and Canadian Pacific, leaving Canada's smaller operators largely unchecked.

One of those small rail companies was the Montreal, Maine and Atlantic, whose unattended, single-operator train carrying 7.6 million litres of volatile crude oil derailed and exploded in Lac-Mégantic on July 6, killing 47 people.

The centre of Lac-Mégantic, Que., wiped away under a clutter of smouldering tanker cars on July 7. An auditor general report found "significant weaknesses" in Transport Canada's railway oversight. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The auditor general's report, which was wrapped up barely a week before the crash, explicitly states it makes no assessment of the Lac-Mégantic disaster.

However, Ferguson acknowledged Tuesday that the deadliest rail accident in Canadian history highlights the audit's significance. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Other report highlights

- The September 2012 recall of seven million kilograms of beef products from XL Foods in Alberta highlighted serious problems at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.
- The Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP need to tighten border security work and take steps to better measure how effective they are at keeping illegals out.
- The Canada Revenue Agency did a good job of following up on leaked reports of Canadians with offshore accounts in Liechtenstein.

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Suspected drone spotted hovering over Hull jail

'Flying object.'
No inmates were in courtyard at time, but jail can't verify whether any contraband fell

JOE LOFARO
Metro in Ottawa

Public safety officials in Quebec don't know for sure whether it was a bird, a plane, or a cape-wearing superhero, but something was in the sky hovering above the Hull jail Sunday morning and they think it was a drone.

Philippe Desjardins, a spokesperson for the ministère de la sécurité publique, said a corrections officer saw a round, orange "flying object" about 15 cm in diameter in the sky above the prison courtyard at 11:20 a.m. The prison is located at 75 rue St-François, which is approximately 5 kilometres west of downtown Ottawa.

"The corrections officer found nothing on the ground in the prison," said Desjardins. "We have no evidence that the drone dropped something or crashed in the perimeter of the prison."

He said the jail confirmed that no inmates were in the courtyard at the time, but officials could not verify whether any contraband fell from the object.

The ministry oversees correctional facilities in the province of Quebec.

"The corrections officer takes this very seriously because they are afraid that kind of flying object (could have) dropped some kind of drugs or cellphone or something like that," said Desjardins. "They're very aware of different methods to stop these kinds of events."

The jail has closed its investigation, according to the ministry spokesperson.

Worried

"They are afraid that kind of flying object (could have) dropped some kind of drugs."

Phillipe Desjardins, spokesperson for the ministère de la sécurité publique, on the corrections officer's fears

Life must go on in battered Philippines

A mother cuddling her baby crosses muddy ground amid devastated buildings around an evacuation centre in the central Philippine province of Leyte on Tuesday. The province of Leyte was right in the destruction path of the Super Typhoon Haiyan, which pummeled central Philippines on Nov. 8. BULLIT MARQUEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Prosecutor demands Knox get 26 years in roommate's murder

Italy. Closing arguments depart from past suggestions that crime was sexually fuelled

In this 2008 photo, Amanda Knox is escorted by Italian penitentiary police officers from Perugia's court after a hearing in central Italy. An Italian prosecutor on Tuesday demanded that an appellate court find Amanda Knox guilty of the 2007 murder of her British roommate and sentence her to 26 years for the killing. ANTONIO CALANNI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

An Italian prosecutor on Tuesday demanded that an appellate court find Amanda Knox guilty of the 2007 murder of her British roommate, a killing he argued may have been rooted in arguments about cleanliness and triggered by a toilet left unflushed by the only man now in jail for the murder.

Prosecutor Alessandro Crini called for 26-year sentences for Knox and Raffaele Sollecito, her co-defendant and former boyfriend, following more than 10 hours of closing arguments over two days. Knox and Sollecito deny any involvement in the killing.

Crini departed from past scenarios by suggesting the crime was not so much sexually fuelled, but an act of physical violence with a sexual expression.

He alleged that Knox and Sollecito acted with another man in an explosion of violence sparked by tension between Knox and British student Meredith Kercher.

Crini argued that Rudy Guede — a native of Ivory Coast now serving a 16-year sentence for the murder — may have inflamed tensions between Knox and Kercher after he defecated in a toilet inside the women's apartment and didn't flush.

Crini said Guede, who was friendly with young men living in a neighbouring apartment, had done the same thing the previous week. "It is an absolutely disgusting and incongruous habit that he evidently had," Crini said.

Testimony in previous trials had cited tensions between Kercher and Knox over the cleanliness of the house they shared with two Italian roommates.

Kercher's murder in the idyllic hillside town of Perugia is getting its third trial after Italy's highest court annulled an appellate ruling overturning the 2009 guilty verdicts against Knox and Sollecito. They were convicted in the first trial, and sentenced to 26 years and 25 years, respectively. Knox's sentence included one year for slander.

Knox's lawyer, Carlo Dalla Vedova, said the shift in the prosecution's theory about events leading up to the killing "confirms the lack of proof."

"In a trial based on clues, all the facts can be interpreted. This prosecutor worked very hard, but it doesn't change the situation. There are too many doubts. It calls for only an acquittal," Dalla Vedova said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Medical pot mail-out leads to firings, robbery

At least three medical marijuana patients have lost their jobs and one person has been the victim of a home invasion since Health Canada outed 40,000 medical pot access program participants in a mass mail-out gaffe last week, according to law firm Branch MacMaster.

The B.C. firm has filed a class-action lawsuit against Health Canada over the privacy breach and says members of the country's medical marijuana program now worry about being attached to the stigma that comes along with using marijuana and fear they may be victim of a robbery. What's worse is the fact that the patients have also been exposed as having diseases, the firm says.

"Individuals that are part of the access program must also, in order to qualify for the program, suffer from a small number of diseases and illnesses that actually themselves come with a public stigma as well," said Branch MacMaster lawyer Kate Saunders.

"It gets even worse than just being outed as users of marijuana; you are being outed as having diseases such as HIV or multiple sclerosis or any number of other diseases you are required to have in order to be able to be qualify for the program."

The named plaintiff in the case, Jason Wilcox, was forced to explain to his 14-year-old daughter that he uses marijuana after she picked up the mail on her way home from school. He says Health Canada forced him to have a conversation with his teenaged daughter that he wasn't quite ready to have.

"She went out to get the mail and asked me, 'Hey Dad, what's this?'" said Wilcox, the founder and director of Cannabis in Canada Society.

Health Canada Deputy Minister George Da Pont said the format of the mailing was the result of an "administrative error."

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Toy company fights for the right to parody

Beastie Boys. They agree with the spoof's message of empowering girls but don't want their songs used in ads

The California toy company GoldieBlox is suing the Beastie Boys to continue using an online video spoof it did of the group's song, Girls.

The song was on the trio's first album, Licensed to Ill, released in 1986. It sings of the desire for girls to "do the dishes ... to do the laundry ... to clean up my room."

The company's marketing video parodying the song depicts young girls singing about building spaceships and coding software. The video has gone viral in recent weeks, and some 8 million people have viewed it on YouTube. The spoof is attempting to sell the company's GoldieBlox engineering toys aimed at girls.

"As creative as it is, make no mistake, your video is an advertisement that is designed to sell a product, and long ago, we made a conscious decision not to permit our music and/or name to be used in product ads," the band members said through their publicist. "When we tried to simply ask how and why our song 'Girls' had been used in your ad without our permission, YOU sued US."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This August 2012 file photo released by GoldieBlox, Inc., shows the toy items from GoldieBlox and the Spinning Machine, photographed in San Francisco. SUSAN V/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/GOLDIEBLOX INC/FILE

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Net loss

Sears Canada deepens cuts with 800 layoffs

Sears Canada is laying off another 800 employees. The retailer said Tuesday that most of the job losses would come from its repair parts and service business, where 712 staff are being eliminated over the next six months. An additional 79 employees will lose their jobs at the company's Toronto head office, it said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Checkpoint

Unruly crowd attacks U.S. border guards

U.S. Border Patrol agents in San Diego were hit with rocks and bottles as they tried to stop about 100 people who'd crossed the U.S.-Mexico border illegally. They became unruly when a border agent tried to stop them. There were no serious injuries during Sunday's confrontation. Agents eventually drove the crowd back to Mexico.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pope for the poor

Pope Francis decries global financial system

Pope Francis denounced the global financial system that excludes the poor as he issued the mission statement for his papacy on Tuesday, saying he wants the Catholic Church to get its hands dirty as it seeks to bring solace and mercy to society's outcasts. Francis is pushing to shift the church away from a focus on doctrine.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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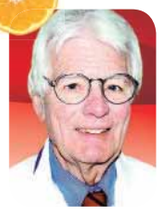

"I recommend Vitamin C and Lysine for Heart Health"

W. Gifford-Jones, MD

Fourteen years ago following my own coronary attack I decided to follow the research of Dr. Linus Pauling, Professor Williams Stehbens and Dr. Sydney Bush and take high doses of vitamin C plus lysine. I am turning 90 soon and I am glad I did!

Dr. Linus Pauling, two-time Nobel Prize winner, was ignored for reporting that large amounts of vitamin C and lysine are needed to prevent coronary attacks. Twenty-five years ago Pauling reported that animals make vitamin C but humans do not and must supplement this important vitamin. Lysine must also be supplemented.

Vitamin C is required to manufacture healthy collagen, the glue that holds coronary cells together, just like mortar is needed for bricks. Lysine, like steel rods in cement, makes collagen stronger. Pauling claimed it takes a mere 10 milligrams of vitamin C to prevent scurvy, but several thousand to prevent heart attack.

Dr. William Stehbens, Professor of Anatomy at Auckland University in New Zealand emphasized that coronary arteries are under more pressure than any other arteries in the body. After all, they're situated in the heart's muscle, not in the big toe. Moreover they're under constant pressure while the heart beats 100,000 times every 24 hours, or 37 million times a year, and 2.2 billion times if you live to 70 years of age.

Without sufficient vitamin C and lysine this constant pounding causes minute cracks in collagen, resulting in blood clots and possible death, or a weakened artery can break, causing a stroke.

Dr. Sydney Bush, an English researcher, has now proven that vitamin C and lysine can reverse atherosclerosis. Bush took retinal photographs, then started his patients on high doses of vitamin C and lysine. One year later new pictures showed atherosclerosis had regressed in retinal arteries.

Now you can take the right combination of vitamin C and lysine in a powder form I developed called Medi-C Plus™. The dosage for Medi-C Plus is one flat scoop with breakfast and the evening meal, mixed in water or juice.

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There are literally tens of thousands of published studies pertaining to vitamin C and lysine individually. Vitamin C is best known for its importance as an antioxidant and for good reason. The vitamin is arguably the single most important water soluble antioxidant in the human body.

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The essential amino acid lysine is probably best known for its use in those with herpes simplex infections. Several other benefits have also been ascribed to the molecule including favourable effects on blood pressure and stroke prevention but also a positive influence on mood and anxiety.

In addition to supporting a healthy cardiovascular system and collagen production, vitamin C and lysine supplementation helps support:

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- Wound healing
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- Recovery from herpes outbreaks
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Climate-change refugee claim denied

New Zealand. Judge rejects Kiribati man's claim that rising sea levels make it too dangerous for family to return to island home

In his decision Tuesday, a New Zealand High Court judge rejected Ioane Teitiota's claim that he should be granted refugee status because of climate change, saying Teitiota did not fit the definition of a refugee under international guidelines because he was not being directly persecuted.

Judge John Priestley said if he broadened the definition, millions more people worldwide suffering from natural disasters or warfare would be eligible to become refugees.

Teitiota and his wife moved to New Zealand from the low-lying Pacific island nation of Kiribati in 2007. He argued that rising sea levels make it too dangerous for him and his family to return there.

Since moving to New Zealand, Teitiota and his wife have had three children. All five are now likely to face deportation, because citizenship isn't automatically granted by birth in New Zealand.

The judge said Teitiota and his children might have mounted a case to stay on humanitarian grounds had they not overstayed their visas.

"Unfortunately for the applicant, because he has chosen to remain illegally in New Zealand, he is, under current law, precluded from applying for an immigration permit on humanitarian grounds," he said.

Kiribati, an impoverished string of 33 coral atolls located about halfway between Hawaii and Australia, has about 103,000 people and has been identified by scientists as being among the nations most vulnerable to climate change. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Frightening predictions

A panel of climate scientists recently issued a report predicting oceans could rise by as much as a metre by the end of the century.

- If that were to happen, much of Kiribati would simply disappear.

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METROLINX

Into the abyss. Bosnian pond suddenly disappears

The villagers of the remote northwestern Bosnian village of Sanica have been in shock since a pond vanished two weeks ago.

The pond was some 20 metres in diameter and about eight meters deep. Now, the "abyss," as the villagers have dubbed the crater, is some 50 metres wide and 30 metres deep — and growing.

"I sat here only a day before it happened, sipping plum brandy," villager Cemal Hasan said. "And then, there was panic. Fish were jumping out, and a big plum tree was pulled down like someone yanked it with a hook."

Scientists say it is not uncommon that ponds and small lakes suddenly disappear. They say it could be caused by drying underground water currents or changes in soil drainage due to irrigation.

An alternative spooky explanation: the owner of the pond took it with him when he died about a month ago. "His daughter saw him walk on the lake the night he died," said another villager, Rezak Motanic.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fuad Cemal holds up a photo of a pond that disappeared in the village of Sanica, Bosnia. AMEL EMRIC/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Central Africa

Congo's okapi nearly extinct

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) says the Congo's national symbol, the okapi, is on the brink of extinction.

The IUCN's Red List of endangered species, published Tuesday, says the population of the okapi, also known as the "forest giraffe," has dwindled because of poaching and habitat loss.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.K.

Wolves escape from British zoo

Zoo staff have killed three wolves who escaped from their pen at Colchester Zoo in southeastern England.

A fourth wandering wolf was subdued with a tranquilizer dart and recaptured, while a fifth quickly returned to its pen on its own Tuesday.

Officials said they do not know how the fence around the pen became damaged, despite being checked on a daily basis.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Drug-cartel's teen killer back in U.S.

Mexican soldiers present convicted murderer Edgar Jimenez Lugo to the media in the city of Cuernavaca, Mexico, on Dec. 3, 2010. ANTONIO SIERRA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Crime. 17-year-old released from prison after serving time for committing murders for Mexican cartel

After finishing the maximum sentence for a juvenile in Morelos, Mexico, Edgar Jimenez Lugo, a U.S. citizen, has returned to the United States.

The interior secretary of southern Morelos state, Jorge Messeguer, said Jimenez went to San Antonio, Texas, where he has family and will apparently go to a residential support facility there.

The U.S. embassy said in a statement that it was "closely co-ordinating with our Mexican counterparts and appropriate authorities in the United States" regarding the release.

In 2011, at age 14, Jimenez confessed to killing four people whose beheaded bodies were found suspended from a bridge.

He was born in San Diego, California, but was raised in Mexico by his grandmother.

Authorities quoted Jimenez as saying he had been forcibly recruited by drug traffickers when he was 11 and confessed to working for the South Pacific drug-cartel, led by reputed drug lord Hector Beltran Leyva.

Jimenez was trying to return to the United States when he was caught in 2010. When he was handed over to federal prosecutors, the boy calmly said that he participated in four killings while drugged and under threat.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Las Vegas

Police dress as turkeys to squawk at bad drivers

Officers dressed in Thanksgiving bird finery walked across the road Tuesday as part of a sting operation in Las Vegas.

It's the fifth annual appearance of the safety mascot dubbed "Butterball One."

Police waiting to the sides of the crosswalks slapped drivers who didn't stop with fines starting at $191.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ontario

Man fined more than $50K for animal cruelty

A Tecumseh, Ont., man has been fined in connection with what the Windsor-Essex County Humane Society calls the "largest farm-animal cruelty case in years."

John Holland pleaded guilty to four out of eight animal-cruelty charges relating to more than a dozen dead animals and some malnourished horses that were found at a farm last summer. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Afghans register for 2014 election

Abdullah Taf, 20, has his picture taken to register for the upcoming Afghan elections in a mosque, used as a mobile voter registration booth in Kabul, Afghanistan. As international troops leave and insurgency persists, Afghans worry they will see the same alleged voting fraud that tainted the last presidential elections, in 2009.

ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Egyptian police fire water cannons to disperse a protest by secular anti-government activists in Cairo on Tuesday — the first implementation of a new law forbidding protests held without a permit. MOHAMMED ASAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Egypt faces growing unrest over new law

Stifling Islamists and non-Islamists alike. Activists say law is harsher than curbs on protests during Hosni Mubarak's rule

Egypt's police fired water cannons Tuesday to disperse two protests by dozens of secular anti-government activists in Cairo, the security forces' first implementation of a controversial new law forbidding protests held without a permit from authorities.

The unrest points to the growing backlash against the law, which imposes heavy restrictions on protests, among the non-Islamist political factions that rallied behind the military's ouster of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi.

Now some in the loose coalition are growing impatient with signs the military-backed interim government is taking the country down a more authoritarian path.

Many non-Islamist activists say the law aims to silence any dissent ahead of a referendum on an amended constitution. Those activists oppose provisions in the revised constitution entrenching greater powers for the military and the president, and curtailing rights to free trials and assembly.

The government says the law is needed to restore security and rein in near-daily protests by Morsi supporters demanding his reinstatement. The Islamist rallies have often descended into bloody clashes with security forces, leaving hundreds dead since Morsi's ouster in July. The government's message has a strong resonance among a public weary of constant protests and unrest.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Secular activists

"They don't want anyone in the streets any more. Not us, not the Islamists."

Rasha Azab, a secular activist, at a rally in Cairo to commemorate an activist, Gaber Salah, killed by police a year ago.

Nepal

Oldest Buddhist shrine unearthed

Archaeologists in Nepal say they have discovered traces of a wooden structure dating from the sixth century BC that they believe is the world's oldest Buddhist shrine.

Kosh Prasad Acharya, who teamed with archaeologists from Britain's Durham University, said Tuesday the structure was unearthed inside the Mayadevi Temple in Lumbini. Buddha, also known as Siddhartha Gautama, is thought to have been born in about the sixth century BC at the temple site. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iran accord. Obama admin., Senate spar over sanctions

An agreement secured with its greatest global foe, the Obama administration pleaded Tuesday with a more familiar if often difficult negotiating partner not to scuttle last weekend's Iran nuclear deal: Congress.

Just back from his diplomatic triumph in Europe, Secretary of State John Kerry delivered a video message to legislators as he urged that they not introduce new economic measures against Iran at a time the U.S. and world powers are withdrawing some sanctions in exchange for the Iranians curtailing their nuclear program.

Kerry asserted that now is the time to get to work on a final agreement that removes any suspicion that Iran is trying to produce nuclear weapons.

Although Kerry was reaching out personally to key senators, Democrats and Republicans appeared determined to increase the pressure on Tehran. Many in Congress are skeptical, if not outright hostile, to the deal reached in Geneva. Two key senators already are at work on legislation to reinstate the full force of sanctions and impose new ones if Iran doesn't make good on its pledge to roll back its nuclear program.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

French bill cracks down on prostitution

Controversial.
Advocates say draft law would punish the customer while protecting the prostitute

France's government is pushing one of Europe's toughest laws against prostitution and sex trafficking, and other countries are watching closely.

Advocates hope that a draft French law going to parliament Wednesday will help change long-held attitudes toward the world's oldest profession — by punishing the customer and protecting the prostitute.

The bill, however, is facing resistance and has prompted petitions defending those who buy sex. Signatories include screen icon Catherine Deneuve — who played a prostitute in the cult film Belle de Jour — and crooner Charles Aznavour.

Prostitution is currently legal in France, but brothels, pimping and soliciting in public are illegal.

The proposed law would introduce a 1,500-euro ($2,000) fine — rising to 3,000-euro at the second offence — for the clients of prostitutes. They could also be forced to attend classes aimed at highlighting the harms of prostitution.

The bill aims to decriminalize the estimated 40,000 prostitutes in France, by scrapping a 2003 law that bans soliciting on the streets, and making it easier for foreign prostitutes to remain legally in France if they enter a process to get out of prostitution. One of the bill's authors, Maud Olivier, says it's about "getting rid the consequence of unequal and archaic relationships between men and women."

The proposed law follows the example of Sweden, which passed similar legislation in 1999. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brrr-ning strong: Olympic torch takes icy dip

In this photo provided by Olympictorch2014.com, torch bearer Natalia Usacheva, ice-cold-water swimmer, exits the Tatyshev Channel of the Yenisei River during the Olympic torch relay in Krasnoyarsk, Russia, on Tuesday. The 65,000-kilometre Sochi torch relay, which started on Oct. 7, is the longest in Olympic history. The torch has even been flown into space. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/OLYMPICTORCH2014.COM

Nestora Salgado

Family pushes for vigilante's release

The family of U.S. woman Nestora Salgado, who leads a vigilante police force in Mexico, has enlisted a human rights group to push for her release after three months in custody on kidnapping allegations. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brazil

Senator's sons' helicopter seized

Brazilian police officials say nearly 450 kilograms of cocaine were found in a helicopter owned by Sen. Zeze Perella's two sons.

A statement from the Federal Police says the helicopter was seized Sunday night. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Calls to step down

U.S. Rep. in rehab to return to work

An aide to U.S. Rep. Trey Radel, who recently pleaded guilty to cocaine possession, says the Republican is focusing on rehab and will return to work as soon as possible, despite calls for him to step down. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Haitian migrants

30 feared dead as sailboat capsizes

A Royal Bahamas Defence Force spokesman says the death toll may reach 30 in the capsizing of a sailboat packed with migrants from Haiti.

Lt. Origin Deleveaux says Bahamian authorities have confirmed that at least 20 people died when the boat flipped over near Staniel Cay. Deleveaux tells The Associated Press that five bodies had been recovered by late Tuesday afternoon with the aid of the U.S. Coast Guard. He says they are trying to recover more by nightfall.

The overloaded sailboat apparently struck a reef and capsized.

About 110 people have been rescued from the boat, including 19 women.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Showdown in Rome

Berlusconi pulls out of government

Silvio Berlusconi pulled his Forza Italia party's support from the government on Tuesday, the eve of a Senate vote to kick the three-time premier out of Parliament because of his tax-fraud conviction. The vote is scheduled for Wednesday and most analysts expect he will lose his seat.

Silvio Berlusconi

The stability of the government of President Enrico Letta wasn't expected to be affected; Letta can still count on the support of lawmakers who split with Berlusconi this month and formed a new party.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quebec briefs Ontario on controversial Jewish sect

Concerns for children. There are claims of dirty homes, kids not able to do basic math, and who speak neither French nor English

Child-welfare authorities in Quebec have briefed their counterparts in Ontario on an ultra-Orthodox Jewish sect that fled to that province last week amid allegations of child neglect.

Authorities in Ontario say they are aware of the group's presence in the Chatham-Kent and Windsor region.

Members of the Lev Tahor community of about 200 people — about half of them children — were under investigation by social services in Quebec for alleged child neglect and because the kids weren't attending school.

The investigation began last winter and Quebec welfare authorities have described the situation for some children as "serious."

The Quebec authorities had been working with the group until Nov. 18, when some 40 families left their homes in Ste-Agathe-des-Monts. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lev Tahor

The Lev Tahor, which means "pure heart," came to Canada in 2005 after their spiritual leader, Rabbi Shlomo Elbarnes, was granted refugee status.

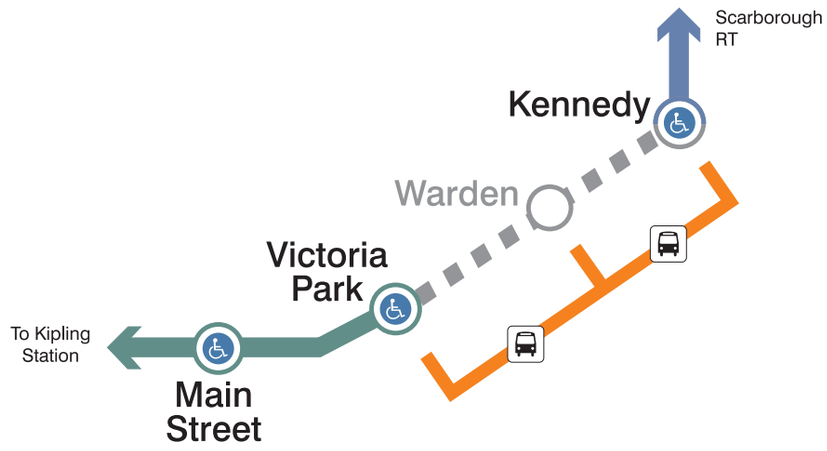
- The anti-Zionist group opposes Israel and advocates Arab domination in the region.

Bloor-Danforth Line

Victoria Park to Kennedy stations
Weekend closure

November 30 and December 1, 2013

No subway service between Victoria Park and Kennedy stations due to rail installation.



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TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

It's all about the genes

U.S. molecular biologist Joan Argetsinger Steitz poses with her Great Medal of The French Academy of Sciences in Paris, Tuesday. Steitz is known for her discoveries involving Ribonucleic acid, a family of biological molecules that perform multiple vital roles in the coding, decoding, regulation and expression of genes. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Locals back plan to bury nuclear waste

Lake Huron. Residents in the Kincardine area support Bruce Power's plan, while Americans in Michigan are worried

Ordinarily, a proposal to bury radioactive waste in a scenic area would inspire "not in my backyard" (NIMBY) protests from local residents.

But conventional wisdom has been turned on its head in southwestern Ontario, where Bruce Power wants to entomb waste from its nuclear plants 680 metres below the surface near Lake Huron.

Some of the strongest support comes from the Kincardine area near the would-be disposal site at the Bruce Power complex, the world's largest nuclear power station, which produces one-fourth of all electricity generated in Ontario. Nuclear is a way of life here, and many residents have jobs connected to the industry.

Meanwhile, the loudest objections are coming from elsewhere in Canada and the U.S. — particularly Michigan, which shares the Lake Huron shoreline with Ontario.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fact of life

"We don't have the knee-jerk reaction when someone says 'nuclear' that other people do.... We grew up with it."

Joanne Robbins, of the chamber of commerce in nearby Saugeen Shores, Ont.

Lake Huron just beyond a fence enclosing a section of the Bruce Power nuclear complex. Plans to bury radioactive waste near Kincardine, Ont., has local support, but Americans have raised concerns. JOHN FLESHER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

159 members

Diplomats fail to reach global trade deal: WTO chief

Negotiators have failed to craft the first global trade deal in more than a decade, which could have given the world economy a $1 trillion boost, the director-general of the World Trade Organization said. Diplomats from the WTO's 159 members tried ahead of a summit where ministers were to have signed the deal next week. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 94.97¢ (+0.17¢)

TSX 13,349.77 (-122.45)

OIL $93.68 US (-41¢)

GOLD $1,241.40 US (+ 20¢)

Natural gas: $3.86 US (+ 2¢)
Dow Jones: 16,072.80 (+ 0.26)

Study. Social media guru is an actual job? Not for long

Jobs for tech-savvy social media experts will be obsolete in 10 years, according to a new study released Tuesday by online employment site Workopolis.

The study predicts that social media experts will be a victim of advancing technology.

That is because today's youth are already immersed in social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.

"People will need to be even more literate with social media just to get in the door and it will no longer be something that absolutely differentiates folks," said Tara Talbot, vice-president of human resources at Workopolis.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Random biz fact of the day

97%

97 per cent of recruiters use LinkedIn, 51 per cent use Facebook, and 49 per cent use Twitter. WORKOPOLIS

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Rogers shoots, scores with $5.2B NHL multimedia deal

12-year term.
Historic pact will diminish CBC's role in HNIC

Canada's hockey TV landscape underwent a seismic shift Tuesday as Rogers Communications wrested control of NHL multimedia rights with a blockbuster 12-year, $5.2-billion agreement that will preserve Hockey Night in Canada but limit CBC's role in the iconic broadcast.

The deal, the largest in NHL history, gives Rogers national rights to all NHL games, including the playoffs and Stanley Cup final, on all its platforms in all languages.

"It will be the NHL like never before," Rogers Media president Keith Pelley promised at a packed news conference Tuesday, touting a "transformational day" for the industry, as well as Rogers' position as a sports broadcasting titan.

A sub-licensing agreement with CBC allows the public broadcaster to continue airing Hockey Night in Canada on Saturday nights for four years, while TVA in Quebec earned all of the Canadian French-language multimedia rights.

But the Rogers coup includes rights to the venerable Hockey Night in Canada brand, allowing Rogers to air the weekly staple across all its platforms, including City and Sportsnet.

"Sometimes it's almost surreal — acquiring the most coveted content in all of Canada, and there is nothing even close, which is the national rights to Hockey Night in Canada," Pelley told reporters after the news conference.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Knew when to fold 'em

The CBC "was not in a position to spend taxpayers money on this game of high stakes."

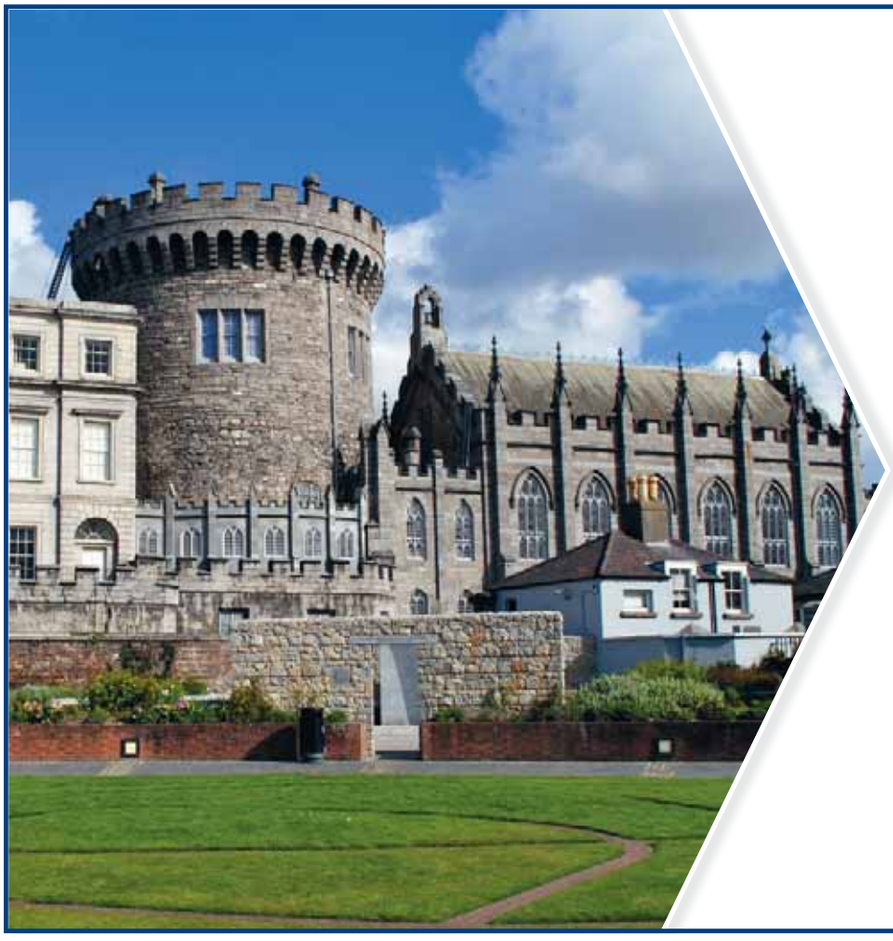
CBC president Hubert Lacroix on the NHL's high financial expectations, which he said the national broadcaster couldn't meet

The triumphant trio, in colour-coordinated duds: Rogers president and CEO Nadir Mohamed, centre, with NHL commissioner Gary Bettman, left, and Keith Pelley, president of Rogers Media, at a news conference on Tuesday. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The good ol' hockey deal

The new deal is raising questions about the future of CBC's talent, especially Don Cherry. Rogers president Keith Pelley said it was too soon to answer those questions.

- It appears TSN is also on the outside looking in. The NHL's news release early Tuesday made no mention of the all-sports network, which currently airs a package of regular-season and playoff games.
- Bell Media vice-president of communications Scott Henderson said TSN would have 10 Leafs games next season under a regional agreement and that, starting in 2015, the network would have 26 regional Leafs games.
- The deal could put the iconic Hockey Night in Canada theme song in limbo. TSN has owned the rights to the jingle since 2008 after CBC was unable to negotiate a new agreement with the song's composer.



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Douglas Coupland

Douglas Coupland's latest novel, Worst. Person. Ever., is available from Random House Canada.

Day 18

metronews.ca/temp

Relationships

Temp work, temp love

With no job security or benefits and fluctuating schedules, temporary employment is affecting personal relationships.

A study by United Way Toronto and McMaster University found those doing precarious work — including contract, temporary and casual workers — are more likely to be single.

Among those aged 25 to 34, 31 per cent with secure employment are single, compared to 54 per cent with precarious jobs. **PHOEBE HO/FOR METRO**

ISTOCK

Carried away

Tittle tattle

We asked you to share your office secrets and you answered:

"During a tough year of merger and acquisition, the president of the company made a speech at the Christmas party and said, 'We will shoot the laggards and carry the wounded!' As the president left the stage, a friend, obviously having partaken of a few too many, ran at the president, jumped on his back and yelled, 'Yahoo, carry me, I'm wounded.' And yes, he was carried — carried out by security!" **METRO READER**

Temp Empathizes with Ducklings

I stayed for a while at Chantelle's, but declined her vodka as I still had to drive — to the oil refinery to meet with Kyle who answered a meet-for-coffee text with: Blue gate, refinery north road, 7:45 look for billboard with photo of happy mallard duck family.

Indeed I found the Duck Family portrait with the banner caption, Always Putting the Environment First. It stood in front of a crude-oil cracking facility straight out of a sci-fi film where mutants on a slave planet convert poor people into snacks for the master species.

"Isn't this place great?" asked Kyle, coming in from the parking lot and wearing his still brand-new journeyman's outfit. "I start on the eight o'clock night shift. I'm totally stoked."

"Kyle, this place is freaky, and who knows what toxins there are in there."

"Shannon, for a guy with no degree, this is a good foot in the door, and if I play my cards right I can be a supervisor in a few years."

My heart felt like one of those little ducklings onto which a massive Acme cartoon anvil has fallen from a mile up. "Where's Mr. Burns' office?"

"Admin's about a mile thataway. Why are you so bummed out? I've got a real grown-up-job job. You should be happy for me."

I was silent.

"And look, I can maybe go work in Libya or Abu Dhabi and make crazy money. That's where the action is. Six months in the Emirates — business class ticket each way — live in a walled compound with satellite TV and well-stocked fridges — the sky's the limit."

I sighed.

"You're always looking for fun facts. Did you know that one barrel of oil — 42 gallons — yields 44 gallons of petroleum products?"

"I didn't."

"It's because when crude oil is converted, it increases in volume. Roughly half of each barrel of crude oil is turned into gasoline for transportation."

When did Kyle drink the "New Kyle" Kool-Aid? I never saw this coming.

"Shannon, for a guy with no degree, this is a good foot in the door, and if I play my cards right I can be a supervisor in a few years."

He asked, "Shannon, why did you want to see me, anyway? Trying to get me involved in your evil plot with the Chinese?"

"As a matter of fact, yes."

"I don't think I'm the espionage type."

"It's not espionage."

"Look, now's not the time for this. I'm going to be late on my first day if I don't get in right now." He started edging backwards toward the entryway. "Besides, this is where I'm at in my life right now. I'm an oil guy."

"Promise me you'll call if you change your mind?"

"Gotta go, Shannon. Bye."

I waved goodbye and got back into Danimal's BMW. I turned on the radio where Dust in the Wind by Kansas was playing and promptly began bawling.

TO BE CONTINUED ...

Random fact of the day

Dolly Parton once anonymously entered a "Dolly Parton look-alike contest" but lost to a drag queen.

SOURCE: WTFFUNFACT.COM

Random biz fact of the day

72%

A majority of job seekers says it's important that a company offers flexible schedules when they are deciding whether to take a position.

SOURCE: CAREERBUILDER

The clock is ticking

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

TEMP is ... well, temporary

Douglas Coupland's 20-day novella is a pop-up project and will disappear from our website this Monday at 12:01 a.m. EST. If you've missed an instalment, there are still five days to catch up at temp.metronews.ca — before it disappears. **METRO**

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SURVIVAL IS MEDIUM-RARE

JUST SAYIN'

Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

If you're an animal, you must be confused.

Take this new survey from Insights West in Vancouver, which shows that 88 per cent of British Columbians oppose trophy hunting.

That's the good news. The bad news is that almost the same number — 85 per cent — think it's OK to eat you.

Even more confusing, 73 per cent think it's OK to hunt animals for food.

If you could speak human, you'd probably point out that it doesn't really matter if you end up over someone's mantle or on the dinner table.

Either way, you're just as dead.

Then of course you might be a dog or a cat, a beneficiary of the $6.5 billion Canadians spend annually on their pets. Still, there's a risk you might end up in an animal shelter, where more than 51,000 cats, dogs and "others" are euthanized annually in Canada.

Be thankful you're not a pet turkey, especially around this time of year. You could get really confused and dead.

You also might want to avoid being a lab rat. As many as 80 million rats and mice are used for research each year, and guess what happens when you're finished serving medical science.

Yup, you're dead.

If you're looking for some evidence that attitudes are changing for the better, wag your tail. Not only do people oppose trophy hunting, only 15 per cent are in favour of killing animals for their fur, good news if you're a beaver. Means you're less likely to become a sheared beaver.

The Insights West survey also says that only 38 per cent are in favour of using animals in rodeos, which means you're less likely to get rope burn, spur sores and any of the other hazards that make the West Wild.

And only 56 per cent think you should be caged in a zoo where you're expected to spend the rest of your life wearing out a concrete trough from padding back and forth, mooching for peanuts.

So if you can get over the fact that 85 per cent want you for dinner, you might think things are looking up. Especially if you're not a member of the 21,286 species threatened with extinction, according to the 49th annual Red List, a census of the world's animals maintained by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, updated just this week. And if you're a Hawaiian Crow or Wyoming Toad, you probably don't mind living at the zoo, because your species is among the 61 extinct in the wild.

Of course, if you're a member of one of the 799 completely extinct species, you're dead.

Probably the best kind of animal you can be is a big nasty critter at the top of the food chain in an inhospitable region of the world where people don't like to go — like a polar bear in the Arctic.

On second thought, if global warming keeps up, there won't be any Arctic. And you know what that means.

ZOOM

Sometimes the dentist is a zoo

SHANE GIBSON/METRO WINNIPEG

Aurora the polar bear goes under

Talk about a risky procedure.

On Tuesday morning veterinarians at the Assiniboine Park Zoo's animal hospital performed dental surgery on Aurora, the 11-month-old female cub who recently arrived at the zoo from Churchill, Man.

Thankfully Aurora was anesthetized for the work, which Dr. Chris Enright, who heads up veterinarian services at the zoo, said isn't too different than what people get done at the dentist.

The zoo said during the procedure, veterinary staff removed two of the polar bear's baby teeth and one adult tooth that were broken and infected.

SHANE GIBSON/METRO WINNIPEG

Rarrrhhh!

"Right now she's only about 110 pounds ... but she still has the attitude of a 600-pound predator. So it's certainly not safe to just ask her to open her mouth."

Dr. Chris Enright
Head of veterinarian services
Assiniboine Park Zoo

Friends at the zoo

- Aurora was brought to the zoo about a month ago.
- There are three other bears: Hudson (the oldest, and from the Toronto Zoo), Storm and another 11-month-old female who was named Kaska on Monday.

Clickbait

LUKE SIMCOE
Metro Online

CONTRIBUTED

Last week, AOL announced it was shutting down Winamp, one of the oldest, most venerable digital music players. Dating back to the days of Napster, Winamp was a favourite among music lovers who wanted something different than stock programs like iTunes and Windows Media Player. Sadly, the application will no longer be available for download as of Dec. 20. Fortunately, there are some free alternatives out there for those who don't need a Genius to tell them what to listen to.

Foobar2000 (foobar2000.org):

Offering a simple, yet powerful interface, Foobar2000 isn't a drag on your computer's resources like iTunes is. It plays almost every audio file type imaginable and lets users tag their own music metadata.

VLC Media Player (videolan.org):

Arguably the most popular open source media player on the market, VLC is a capable replacement. As a bonus, it's available on Windows, Mac, iOS, Android and Linux, so it meets the definition of 'cross-platform.'

AIMP (aimp2.us):

If you just can't let Winamp go, try this clone. AIMP's interface is almost identical to Winamp's, right down to the 18-channel equalizer and modular windows.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Rogers' #NHL deal will see them assume control over #HNIC. What do you want left the same? What do you want changed?

@Fontaine_D: It won't be long before we finally see the last of Don Cherry on HNIC. Thank you Rogers!

@cjoanporter: Question: Does all this #HNIC moving to Rogers news mean I'll no longer have to see/hear Don Cherry? Bc then I'm all for it.

@scottmahoney94: yay monopoly

@bonnaventure: replace Don Cherry with an upturned mop w/ bucket for head. Replace Ron Maclean with Stuart McLean. Add @strombo 4 some reason less hockey, more 'who wore it best' segments.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: torontoletters@metronews.ca

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The success beneath the beard

Television. Exploring the hairy truth behind the smash hit Duck Dynasty and their colourful cast of redneck characters

MIKE DOJC
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Duck Dynasty's success has led to an number of backwater reality TV imitators. ZACH DILGARD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Reality TV has certainly gotten hairier in recent years. Remember the clean-shaven landscape of the first decade of the 2000s when cheeks were bare and exfoliated, and on top coifs were as mussed over as Ryan Seacrest's frosted tips?

The rose-toting bachelors, catwalk strutting top models, and silicone enhanced housewives who defined that era are still with us, but the idle life of mansion hopping, wine guzzling and recreational crisis-provoking that their ilk hawks has been eclipsed by a feral five o'clock shadow.

Reality that captures the current zeitgeist tends to aim its muzzle at a motley crew of outdoorsy folks who buck fashion trends and look more hobo than Hollywood.

Duck Commander founder Phil Robertson was a QB1 ahead of future hall-of-famer Terry Bradshaw at Louisiana Tech in the mid-1960s before giving up the gridiron for the duck blind.

Along with his kooky brother Si, boudin-cooking wife Miss Kay, business-savvy son Willie and the rest of the loveable Robertson clan, the Duck Dynasty family are the undisputed lords of the backwoods boob tube explosion that has given us hooch making Moonshiners, wild boar hunting American Hoggers, and gator wrestling Swamp People. The bodacious Bayou beards sported by the world's favourite duck calling sons have sold umpteen books, bobbleheads, school supplies, garden gnomes, and even Chia pets.

Their squirrel eating comedic gold melds the best parts of The Beverly Hillbillies and The Waltons with a dash of Dukes of Hazzard camp thrown in to create A&E's most successful show ever — a cable goliath aired in more than 100 countries.

The finale of Duck Dynasty's third season drew 9.6 million viewers and trounced Fox's American Idol and CBS's Survivor in the coveted 18-49 demo.

Those heavy hitters of yesteryear couldn't reach the bottom wisps of the wizened beard of the Redneck Gandalf, Phil Robertson. Then season four's premiere blew their already boffo numbers out of the water with a record setting 11.8 million tuning in for a quacking good time.

A Reddit thread dedicated to pondering the secret of this band of bushy-faced brothers' rampant popularity dwells on all sorts of cockamamie theories.

But in the end, they stand apart from their Lifestyles of the Redneck & Famous television brethren because of their cartoonish whiskers which tots will be wearing reasonable facsimiles of when they come knocking on your door for many Halloweens to come.

Be sure to give them extra candy if they drop a choice Si quote.

"I am the MacGyver of cooking. If you bring me a piece of bread, cabbage, coconut, mustard greens, pigs feet, pine cones...and a woodpecker, I'll make you a good chicken pot pie," or "I sting like a butterfly and punch like a flea," are certainly deserving of an extra Snickers bar.

Furry and family friendly programming, Duck Dynasty is as infectious as The Big Bang Theory but instead of comic books and other nerd totems, the bearded bros' banter casts a much wider net, tackling everything from hot tubs to taxidermy.

Whatever homespun hijinks the beardos are up to from busting up beaver dams to driving around West Monroe looking for a place to dump a freezer full of rotten meat, the show always culminates with the Robertson's setting aside any of the day's minor squabbles and breaking bread at a giant dinner table.

Through thick and thin their blankets of fur blow in the wind. Sans face manes this would be a plain old vanilla reality-based sitcom. Their billowing beards augment their natural-born charisma making them larger than life.

"They have a wild man, nature-loving, anti-authority quality that really stands out," weighs in Dr. Allan Peterkin, the author of One Thousand Beards-A Cultural History of Facial Hair, and grooming consultant for Dove's Men+Care face range.

"Their beards are an unforgettable part of their philosophy, brand, and trademark," says Peterkin.

Reading the beards

The Duck Dynasty crew's beards are furry manifestations of the men lurking beneath them. Pogonologist Dr. Allan Peterkin reads the Robertson kin's face follicles to determine the beard statement the men are making.

- **Si.** "Substance over style."
- **Patriarch Phil.** "Longer is wiser."
- **CEO Willie.** "Seems gentle, poetic, approachable."

Television. Even Jack can't defend Joffrey's creepiness

Jack Gleeson plays King Joffrey in Game of Thrones. CONTRIBUTED

I guess when a video of you getting slapped in the face goes viral, it rubs a little bit of the glitter off a showbiz career.

Jack Gleeson, who plays the vile adolescent King Joffrey on Game of Thrones, says he'll probably give up acting after the series ends (or after Joffrey dies horribly, which, knowing GoT, could happen a lot sooner).

"The lifestyle that comes with being an actor in a successful TV show isn't something I gravitate towards," the Irish Trinity College student said on Dublin's Saturday Night Show.

"It was a recreation beforehand and when I started doing Game of Thrones there was, I wouldn't say pressure, but perhaps the reality became too real for me."

What reality? Tumblrs and Tumblrs of hatred dedicated to your own sullen face? Maybe. Jack, who seems like a sweet guy in real life, admits that even he gets creeped out by Joffrey.

"You tend to abstract yourself from the creepiness of it when you're playing it, but when you see it on television it sends shivers down my spine," he says. "I would like to try and defend him, but I would have a pretty hard job doing it."

MELINDA TAUB/METRO WORLD NEWS IN NEW YORK CITY

Musical

Black Nativity

Director. Kasi Lemmons

Stars. Forest Whitaker, Angela Bassett, Jennifer Hudson

The real Christmas miracle of this film adaptation of Langston Hughes' play Black Nativity might be that it was made at all. The musical follows a plucky Baltimore youth (Jacob Latimore) shipped off to stay with estranged grandparents over the holidays while his mother (Hudson) struggles to put a roof over his head. It's a promising start, especially coupled with the talents of Whitaker, Basset and Hudson. But cloying dialogue, a predictable narrative and a nonsensical, church-based second act quickly makes Black Nativity intolerable.

MANORI RAVINDRAN

Animated

Frozen

Directors. Chris Buck, Jennifer Lee

Stars. Kristen Bell, Josh Gad, Idina Menzel

The Princesses of Arendelle, Anna (Kristen Bell) and Elsa (Idina Menzel), are polar opposites. Anna is a warm-hearted adventurer while Elsa has the awesome power to manifest ice and snow from her fingertips. When Elsa accidentally plunges her kingdom into an endless winter Anna sets off with mountain man Kristoff (Jonathan Groff), his reindeer and a sun-worshipping snowman named Olaf (Josh Gad) to save the realm. Frozen has all the elements of classic Disney — amusing animals, catchy songs and two princesses — but wants for more complex characters. RICHARD CROUSE

Action

Homefront

Director. Gary Fleder

Stars. Jason Statham, James Franco

The first thing you need to know about Homefront is that it was scripted by Sylvester Stallone. That pretty much says everything about the thriller's severe tone, stock characterizations and messy combat choreography. Silly, but viscerally satisfying, Jason Statham plays an undercover DEA agent hiding in backwoods Louisiana until his cover is blown and old enemies come calling. Homefront's cast has trouble finding the right tone — especially one-time Oscar-nominee Winona Ryder playing a completely expendable former biker chick. STEVE GOW

Thriller

Oldboy

Director. Spike Lee

Stars. Josh Brolin, Elizabeth Olsen

Spike Lee's remake of Oldboy will be best appreciated by those who haven't seen the original Korean award-winner. That's because the premise of a businessman seeking bloody vengeance on whomever inexplicably locked him up for 20 years hinges on not knowing the final twist (even if Lee does alter it slightly). An assault of gratuitous violence, this update is nothing short of energetic but its lack of cohesion and expressiveness will almost certainly repel fans of the original.

STEVE GOW

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Homefront (14A) Wed-Thu 1:30-4:10-7:05-9:35

Scotiabank Theatre 259 Richmond St.
Homefront (14A) Wed-Thu 1:25-3:50-7:35-10:15
Oldboy (18A) Wed-Thu 1-3:10-4:10-5:40-7-8:10-9:40-10:40

Market Square, 80 Front St.
Frozen (G) Wed-Thu 12:50-3-6:40-9:05
Homefront (14A) Wed-Thu 12:45-3:15-7-9:15

Canada Square 2200 Yonge St.
Homefront (14A) Wed-Thu 4:10-6:20

Yonge-Eglinton Centre 2300 Yonge St.
Frozen (G) Wed-Thu 1:15
Frozen 3D (G) Wed-Thu 4:15-7-9:45

Yonge & Dundas 24

10 Dundas St East
Black Nativity (G) Wed-Thu 2:15-4:40-7-9:30
Frozen (G) Wed-Thu 3:15-6:05-8:40
Frozen 3D (G) Wed-Thu 1:40-4:35-7:05-9:50

Queensway 1025 The Queensway
Frozen (G) Wed-Thu 12:20
Frozen 3D (G) Wed-Thu 1:40-4:20-7-9:40

Woodbine Centre 500 Rexdale Blvd.
Black Nativity (G) Wed-Thu 1:20-3:55-7:10-9:20
Frozen (G) Wed-Thu 1:15-4:15-7:05-9:25
Homefront (14A) Wed-Thu 1:10-4:10-6:50-9:40

Beach Cinemas 1651 Queen St. E.
Frozen 3D (G) Wed-Thu 6:30-8:55

Empress Walk 5095 Yonge St.
Frozen 3D (G) Wed-Thu 3:15-6:30-9:15
Oldboy (18A) Wed-Thu 3:50-7-9:40

Silvercity Fairview 1800 Sheppard Ace. E
Frozen (G) Wed-Thu 1:30
Frozen 3D (G) Wed-Thu 4:40-7:30-10:10

Coliseum Scarborough 300 Borough Dr.
Black Nativity (G) Wed-Thu 2-4:25-6:55-9:25
Frozen (G) Wed-Thu 1:30 4:15-7-9:55
Homefront (14A) Wed-Thu 1-3:45-6:50-9:40
Oldboy (18A) Wed-Thu 2:10-4:50-7:35-10:15

Eglinton Town Centre 1901 Eglinton Ave. E.
Frozen (G) Thu 2
Frozen 3D (G) Wed-Thu 4:45-7:40-10:25
Homefront (14A) Wed 5:25-8-10:40 Thu 2:15-5:25-8-10:40

401 & Morningside 785 Milner Ave.
Black Nativity (G) Wed-Thu 6-8:20
Frozen (G) Wed-Thu 5:10
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Homefront (14A) Wed-Thu 5:25-7:55

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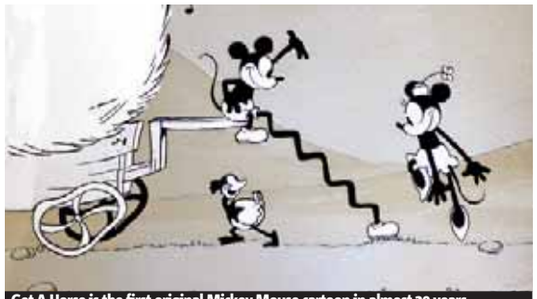
Walt Disney. How a legacy can animate the future



Get A Horse is the first original Mickey Mouse cartoon in almost 20 years. CONTRIBUTED

An everything-old-is-new-again theme emerges when looking at the slate of upcoming Disney films.

A titan in Hollywood and one of the largest media conglomerates in the world, the Mouse House is looking back at their rich history in a very interesting way.

For instance, Get a Horse, the dazzling new short that plays before Frozen in theatres, is the first original Mickey Mouse theatrical cartoon in almost two decades.

But more than simply being a reintroduction to a beloved character, it's also a deft marriage of old and new techniques that features, through some technical wizardry, the first vocal performance from Walt Disney since the 1960s.

In the live action roster there's the Oscar hopeful Saving Mr. Banks, the story of the making of the classic Mary Poppins, and Tomorrowland, an epic sci-fi saga that was allegedly inspired by the contents of a mysterious box found in the Disney archives.

The 90-year-old company has one eye on the past and the other very much on the future.

"We like to think of our legacy as a springboard to the future and not something that anchors us so you can't move your feet," says Walt Disney Animation Studios general manager and executive vice-president Andrew Millstein.

"There is a great wealth of characters and visual material, but in its day the best of Disney was innovative and moved with audiences. We should do the same."

So what should audiences anticipate from Disney in the next few years? Millstein says audiences should, "expect the unexpected."

"We have to be fiercely original. We have to give audiences things they haven't seen before. We want to surprise audiences. We want our stories to be compelling, the worlds to be great, the technology and the visuals to be stunning. If we do our jobs well, that is what's going to happen."

RICHARD CROUSE/FOR METRO

Hollywood keeps looking to Asia for, um, inspiration

Remakes or ripoffs?

From Godzilla to classic Westerns, U.S. studios know they can find fodder in the East

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Elizabeth Olsen and Josh Brolin in Oldboy. CONTRIBUTED

Everyone knows Godzilla was a superstar in Japan long before he went Hollywood and started stomping American landmarks into matchsticks. Despite making his debut in 1954, the King of the Monsters had to wait until 1998's Roland Emmerich film Godzilla to be to be fully reimagined by an American studio.

So you knew of Godzilla's roots, but did you also know The Magnificent Seven and A Fistful of Dollars were remakes of Asian films?

Add to that list this weekend's Oldboy, a Spike Lee re-creation of a violent Chanwook Park film. Josh Brolin plays a man searching for answers as to why he was kidnapped and held in solitary confinement for twenty years.

Spike Lee says the original director only offered up one piece of advice. "Josh went to Park and asked for his blessing," he told MTV. "Park gave it, and the one thing he said to Josh — which Josh related to me — was, 'Make a different film; don't do the same thing I did.' (So) that's the way we did it."

Hollywood has looked to Asia for inspiration for years.

Akira Kurosawa's films provided fodder for two redone classics. The epic Seven Samurai became the gunfighter flick The Magnificent Seven and the director's Yojimbo provided the backbone for A Fistful of Dollars, starring Clint Eastwood.

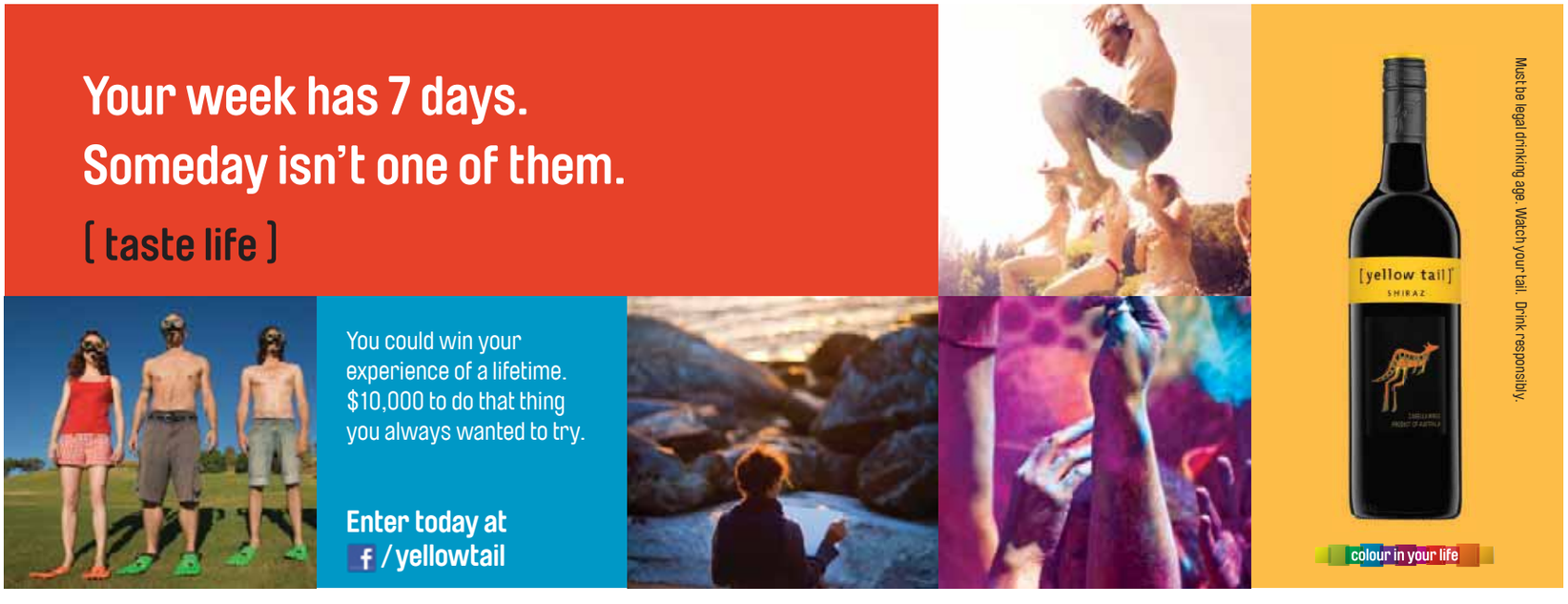
Once again Old West gunfighters subbed for samurai but the premise of one man playing rivals off one another remains. Since the movie was an unofficial remake Kurosawa sued, won and later bragged he made more money off of Fistful of Dollars than Yojimbo.

At the turn of the millennium Japanese movies like Ringu, Ju-on and Geoul Sokeuro helped reinvent Hollywood horror.

The best known of the Asian horror remakes was The Ring, an unlikely story of a cursed videotape that caused the viewer to die within a week of watching it. Roger Ebert called the movie boring and "borderline ridiculous" but it was a huge hit and paved the way for others like The Grudge and Dark Water.

Hollywood has often looked to Asia for inspiration, but sometimes it has worked the other way round.

Saidoweizu is a Japanese version of the wine-soaked romantic dramedy Sideways, director Toshikazu Nagae put his own spin on Paranormal Activity 2: Tokyo Night, and A Woman, a Gun and a Noodle Shop transports Blood Simple's action from 1980s Texas to 19th century China.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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Megan Fox.

Fox not resenting her baby this time

Megan Fox is totally digging being pregnant the second time around.

"For the most part, I would say it's been a lot easier," she tells E! News recently.

"I think that could have a lot to do with the fact that I already have a baby, so I'm so distracted taking care of him that I don't really have time to sit and lament on the fact that I'm pregnant or indulge my pregnancy."

Fox and husband Brian Austin Green welcomed her son, Noah, 14 months ago.

The Word

Sorry Brad, there will be no private island for you

Angelina Jolie surely plans to do something special for Brad Pitt's 50th birthday next month, but that something special apparently doesn't involve buying him an island.

The NY Daily News had reported that Jolie laid out $20 million for an 11-acre, heart-shaped private island on New York's Lake Mahopac, but the owners of the property, named Petra Island, tell E! News that it's still for sale.

"We are open to show Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt the island, but they have to have lunch at my café first," says Donna Massaro, daughter of the island's owners.

The island would be of particular interest to Pitt since the two houses on it were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, one of his favourite architects.

Farrah Fawcett. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

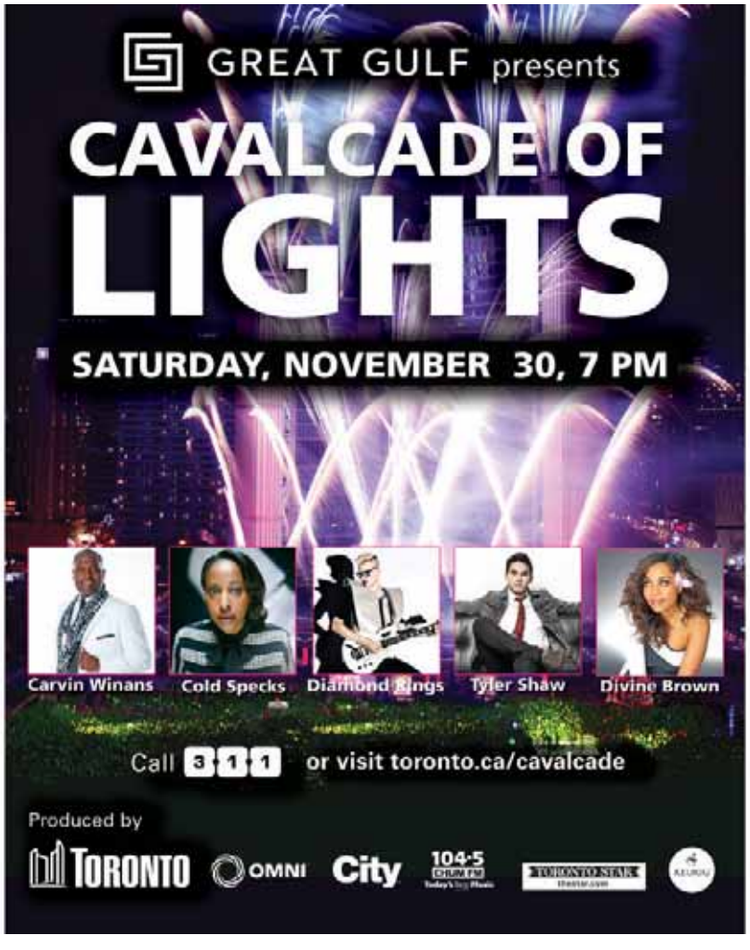
Do you want to own a part of Farrah Fawcett?

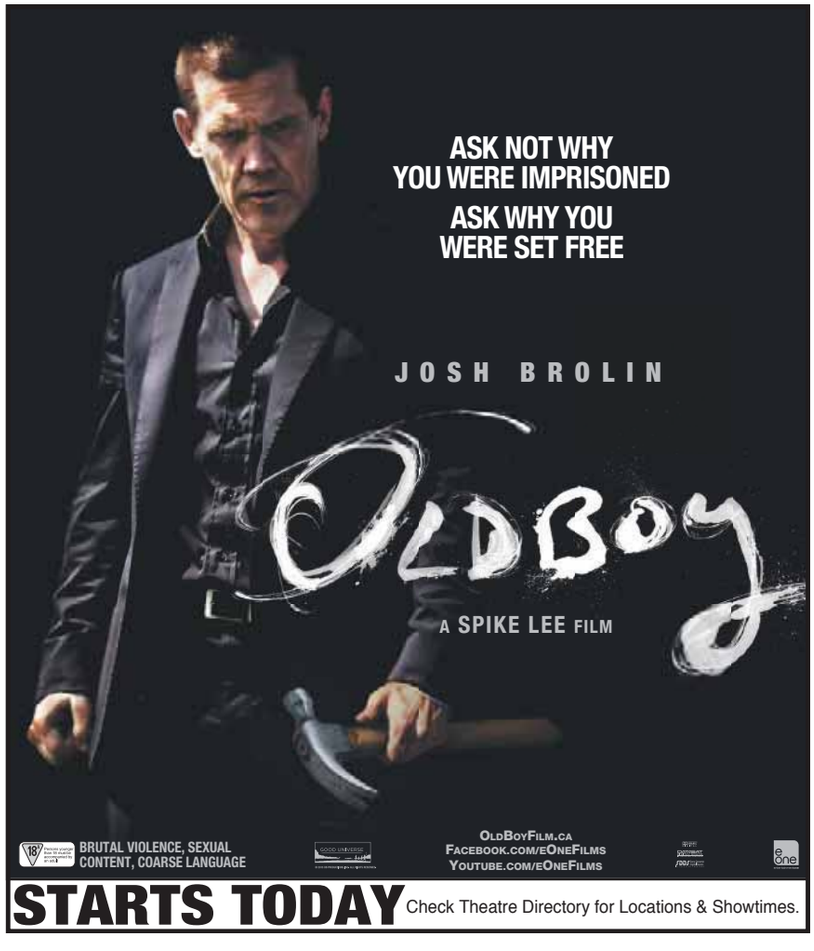
Farrah Fawcett's nephew Gregory Walls inherited much of the late actress' personal items, and now he's apparently looking to get rid of some of them.

Walls listed 67 of Fawcett's items — including her People's Choice Award and her driver's licence — with a Dallas-based auction house, according to Radar Online. Walls insists he's unloading the goods for the sake of her fans, writing in the auction catalogue that he decided to list the items after reading thousands of cards and letters they'd sent her.

"It was at that moment that I felt that I would do my best to give her fans a chance to possess some of the things that were special and dear to Farrah."

A portion of the proceeds will go to the Farrah Fawcett Foundation.





Katniss Everdeen for a day

North Carolina. Follow in the footsteps of some of your favourite tributes by visiting the sites from the Hunger Games film

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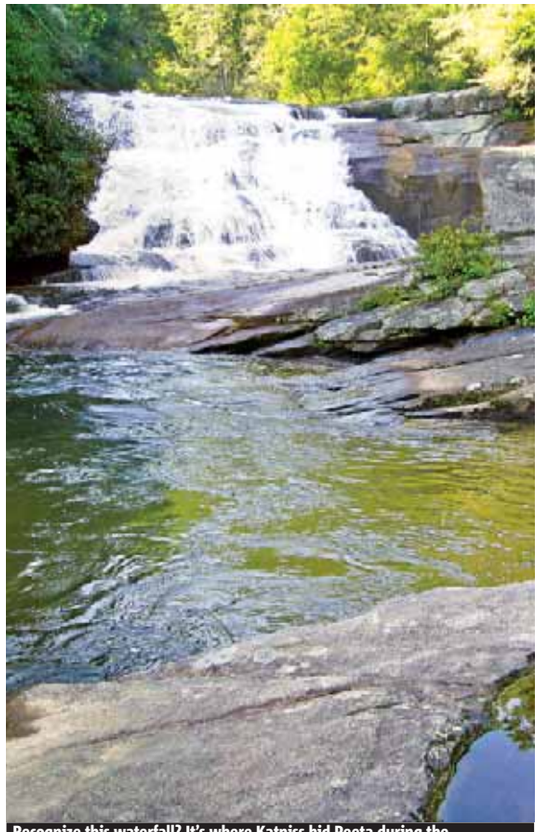

Recognize this waterfall? It's where Katniss hid Peeta during the Hunger Games. PHOTOS: VAWN HIMMELSBACH

Metro's intrepid travel writer Vawn Himmelsbach channels her inner Katniss Everdeen during an archery lesson in North Carolina.

Want to shoot an arrow like Katniss or learn the art of sling shot like Rue? Whether you're a fan of the Hunger Games or an avid outdoor enthusiast, adventure awaits in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains.

Hike in the wilderness, learn survival skills, or just eat and drink like a celebrity — and may the odds be ever in your favour.

Hit the trails in Dupont State Recreational Forest (about an hour's drive from Asheville) where you'll discover some of the most iconic scenes from the first film. Pick up a trip planner at the Asheville Visitors Center or use the interactive online map (exploreasheville.com) to organize day trips out of Asheville.

A few points of interest in Dupont: hike to Triple Falls (from the main parking lot) to see where Katniss discovers a wounded Peeta. Or head to the scenic Bridal Veil Falls, where Katniss flees from the firestorm. (Note: The waterfalls were edited out of the film, since the tributes were always on the hunt for water.)

If you're interested in behind-the-scenes scoop, it's well worth going on a Hunger Games Unofficial Fan Tour, where your guide will take you to locations used in the first film — locations that would be near impossible to find on your own. You'll also learn archery, sling shot and special-effects camouflage, and eat lunch featuring foods that your favourite tributes would have eaten. Day tours run from April to October and cost $59 US; visit hungergamesunofficialfantours.com for more info.

You can also visit Henry River Mill Village, the location for District 12. Because of vandalism, this abandoned mill town about an hour east of Asheville is closed to the public, but you can take a Hunger Games Unofficial Fan Tour for $50 US. Or, head to Chimney Rock Park for short hikes and rock climbs (also the filming location of The Last of the Mohicans).

Where to stay:

Spend the night at Hotel Indigo, where Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson and Liam Hemsworth stayed during the shoot. This boutique hotel has a contemporary vibe, with unique local touches such as wall murals in each room of nature scenes taken by a local photographer.

Until March 31, Hotel Indigo is offering a Hunger Games package, which includes two nights accommodation, a $15-per-person gift card for lunch at Early Girl Eatery, chocolate chip cookies in your room (Jennifer and Josh's favourite), as well as local Hunger Games trivia. Prices begin at $290 US; email snewton@hlihotels.com for more info.

What to do:

Head to Lexington Avenue Brewery for brisket mac 'n cheese or mountain trout tacos. Alternatively, go to the Laughing Seed Café, where vegan Woody Harrelson went for vegetarian fare. Then head to The Southern for a vanilla bourbon mint julep on the patio.

To get your heart racing, check out Nantahala Outdoor Center for whitewater rafting and zip line tours. You can also hone your outdoor survival skills by taking a wilderness medicine course (scheduled classes or private instruction). Visit noc.com for more info.

Real or not real?

Hunger Games Unofficial Fan Tours will be offering guided tours behind the making of Catching Fire in Atlanta, Ga. You'll visit film locations via private shuttle, learn archery, play archery tag and make your own volcanic rock. Tours start Dec. 14, running through 2014 ($94 US). For die-hard fans take a full weekend, which includes themed accommodations and food, survival training, banquet and game simulation (beginning April 2014 for $599 US).

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It came upon the window clear

Pane and fame.
Manhattan's retailers have a long history of spreading Christmas cheer through displays

A group gathers to admire one of Macy's window displays in midtown Manhattan. PHOTOS: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Forget window shopping, some of Manhattan's biggest and most storied retailers say their elaborate seasonal window displays are a gift to passers-by.

Reimagining every major holiday covered in a slick coating of ice, recreating cozy Christmas morning scenes and paying homage to a local legend can be a yearlong labour of love.

"Every store has their own style," says David Hoey, senior director of visual presentation at Bergdorf Goodman. "We try to pick a theme that will lend itself for us to go to town. We all do."

At his corner of 57th Street and Fifth Avenue, arguably one of the most famous shopping intersections in the world, Hoey isn't just celebrating Christmas, he's paying homage to 12 holidays, including Valentine's Day, Independence Day and Halloween.

Kitty-corner from Bergdorf is Tiffany & Co. and its scenes that aim to capture the New York holiday of your best dreams and memories. "We are telling a story of the lives that go on here and the interactions that happen on Christmas Day and on that morning in New York City," says Richard Moore, vice-president of creative visual merchandising.

"It's about holiday spirit and celebrated tradition. The windows are for all ages, all different cultures. We just want you to stop and look and engage in our windows," he adds.

Here's what window watchers can see now through the end of December, all located in midtown New York:

A child admires a window display at Macy's in Manhattan.

Barneys NY: Barneys' holiday collaboration with Jay Z, whose full name is Shawn Corey Carter, certainly has created the most headlines, but not for the windows or the BNY SCC collection items they feature. The focus has been on the partnership in the midst of customers' accusations of racial profiling while they were buying expensive items.

The windows, though, are trained on high tech with interactive installations that feature light shows and a virtual sleigh ride with Santa and Mrs. Claus, fresh off Madison Avenue makeovers. There are entrances and exits on the side of a darkened theatre display for a three-minute, 3-D experience of the city skyline.

Bergdorf Goodman: The Holidays on Ice theme exists in a "sort-of time warp," Hoey says. There are details from the 17th through 21st centuries — and all coated with a little glimmer and shimmer.

Bloomingdale's: A quick trip around the block seems a trip around the world, with oversized packages celebrating shopping around the world, including France, Italy and China — and New York, of course.

Macy's: A little boy journeys through an enchanted forest, meeting all sorts of extraordinary characters along the way, then comes away with belief in faith and some magical dreams.

Tiffany & Co.: A miniature sleigh filled with boxes in Tiffany Blue visits an enchanting neighbourhood on a snowy night.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

N.Y.C. tree lightings

- **South Street Seaport.** 19 Fulton St. Tree lighting Nov. 29, 6 p.m. Along with the lighting ceremony, See/Change's ice rink will open and there will be live music.
- **Madison Square Park.** Entrance at 25th Street and Fifth Avenue. Tree lighting Dec. 10, 3:30 p.m. This tradition will brighten up the park again this year, as will performances by the New York Life Singers and Audra Rox.
- **Rockefeller Center.** 30 Rockefeller Plz. Tree lighting: Dec. 4, 7 p.m.

Holiday outings

Head to the market for festive cheer

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

Did the holiday season sneak up on you? A Christmas themed getaway will help jump start your festive spirit.

In the past several years Toronto has done a wonderful job re-creating the cheer and charm that is a traditional European Christmas market. Located in the city's historic Distillery District, this year's Lowe's Toronto Christmas Market runs from Friday, November 29 through to Sunday, December 15. The entire area is decked out for the holidays complete with lighting and décor displays, roving carolers and traditional wooden booths selling locally handcrafted goods, decorations and Christmas themed foods. Many of the booths feature items from Eastern European countries, Holland and Germany, where the tradition of Christmas markets began in the early 1400s. An added bonus is the expanded liquor licence, which allows visitors to enjoy an authentic holiday beverage including mulled wine and hot rum by an outdoor fire.

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Orlando. Fifth year for the exclusive Deals Made for Canadians program

Special savings exclusively for Canadians and new attractions at Universal Orlando Resort, Sea World Orlando and Walt Disney World Resort make this the perfect time to book an Orlando vacation.

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Thanks to one of the largest expansion periods in Orlando history, visitors can be among the first to experience new attractions in every corner of the theme park area.

Help save the world from the Decepticons in Transformers: The Ride 3D, or walk the streets of Springfield in the world's first Simpsons themed area at Universal Orlando Resort.

Get transported into the icy world of penguins at the family adventure ride, Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin at Sea World Orlando. CONTRIBUTED

Meet Cinderella, Rapunzel and other Disney princesses in the Castle Courtyard located in the centre of New Fantasyland at Walt Disney World's new Princess Fairytale Hall.

Get transported into the icy world of penguins on a first-of-its-kind family adventure ride, Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin at Sea World Orlando. Follow animal warriors on magical journeys at Legoland Florida's new area, the World of Chima, based on the Cartoon Network animated TV series.

Get up a close-up look at the Space Shuttle Atlantis and learn the history of NASA's 30-year Space Shuttle program at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.

For more information, visit VisitOrlando.ca or call 800-551-2006.

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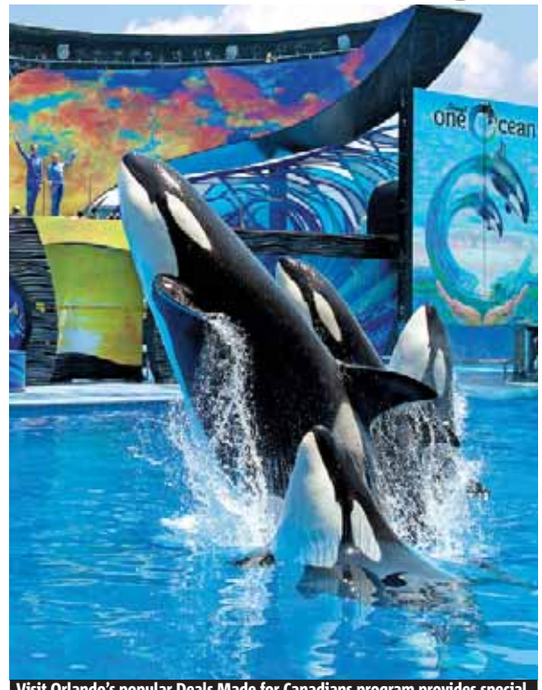

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- Universal Orlando Resort — Four-night vacations starting from only $299 per adult.
- Walt Disney World Resort — Save up to $600 US for a family of four on a five-night/six-day room, ticket and dining plan package at select hotels. Book before Feb. 22, 2014, for stays from Jan. 5 to April 12, 2014.

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Take the chill out of November cold with Black Bean & Avocado Soup

ROSE REISMAN
For more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

This creamy, rich-tasting soup is very nutritious. I like to serve it garnished with reduced-fat sour cream, diced plum tomatoes or a sprinkle of shredded cheddar cheese.

1. Spray a nonstick saucepan with cooking oil, add vegetable oil and place over medium heat. Cook the onion, carrot and garlic, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes or until softened.

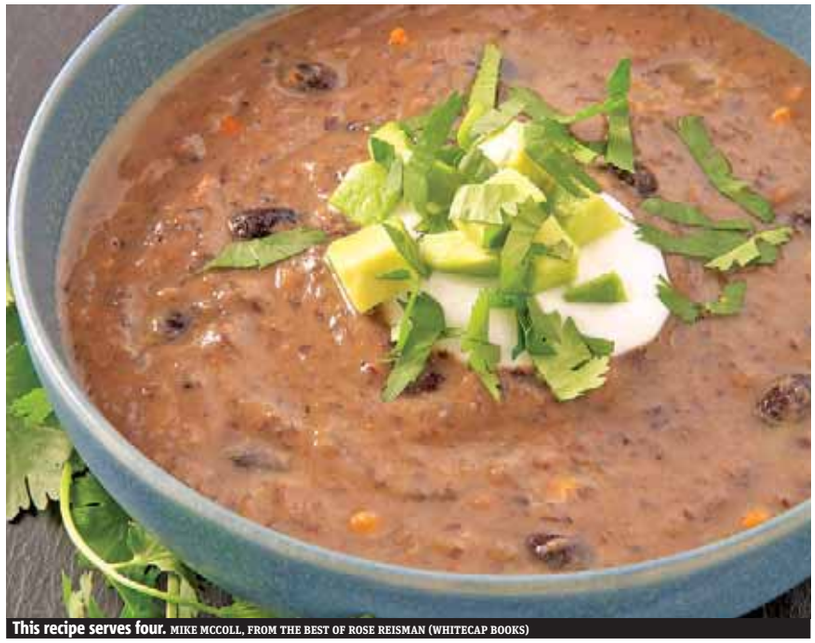
2. Set aside 1/2 cup of the black beans. Add the remaining beans, stock, sugar and cumin to the vegetable mixture. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium low. Cover and cook for 15 minutes or until the carrots are tender.

3. Purée soup in blender or food processor, working in batches. Return to saucepan. Stir in reserved beans.

4. Ladle the soup into individual bowls and garnish with cilantro and avocado and sour cream. **THE BEST OF ROSE REISMAN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY: ROSE REISMAN**

Ingredients

- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped carrot
- 2 tsp minced fresh garlic
- one 19 oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable stock
- 1/2 tsp granulated sugar
- 3/4 tsp cumin
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro or parsley
- 1/4 cup diced avocado and reduced-fat sour cream



This recipe serves four. MIKE MCCOLL, FROM THE BEST OF ROSE REISMAN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

Drink of the Week

Juicy Dreams

Bourbon has all the qualities for a cold weather base: warming, festive, affordable and compatible. And because of those qualities, you don't need to do much to it to create a terrific cocktail.

- Ice
- 2 oz bourbon
- 1 oz Lillet
- 1/2 oz lemon juice
- 2 oz pomegranate juice

In an ice-filled cocktail shaker, combine the bourbon, Lillet, lemon juice and pomegranate juice. Shake, then strain into an ice-filled tumbler. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Lunch. Grilled Cheese and Asparagus Rolls

1. Preheat contact grill. (If your contact grill has more than one tempe setting, set to high.)

2. Slice rolls in half and place, cut side down, on grill. With lid open, grill for 1 minute.

3. Evenly divide cheese, asparagus and red pepper among rolls to make 4 sandwiches. Sprinkle with pepper.

4. Spread 2 ml (1/2 tsp) of butter on the outside of each roll. Be sure to butter both sides.

5. Place sandwiches on grill and close tightly. Grill for 2 to 3 minutes or until golden brown and crisp.

Ingredients

- 4 kaiser rolls
- 250 ml (1 cup) grated sharp cold-pack cheddar cheese
- 8 spears asparagus, trimmed and steamed
- 1/4 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- Freshly ground black pepper (optional)
- 10 ml (2 tsp) butter, room temperature, divided

THE CANADIAN PRESS/ 125 BEST INDOOR GRILL RECIPES BY ILANA SIMON (ROBERT ROSE INC., ROBERTROSE.CA, 2013).

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It's alright 'cause I'm saved by the benefits of having a diverse degree

Change of the chalkboard. How to stretch your teaching degree far beyond the desks and dictation

DANIEL MOORE
TalentEgg.ca

Even if you find a career path you love, it's always a good idea to be aware of industries and roles that match your skills and experience. This is particularly true of teaching, which some individuals explore and discover isn't for them — while others have trouble landing a teaching job in the first place.

How do you find a career outside the classroom when all of your education and work experience have taken place inside those four cozy walls? Also, how do you repurpose an education degree on paper to convince an employer that you're qualified to pursue a different calling?

Most of all, can you find a job that will rival the joy and passion you have for educating and inspiring young minds?

Yes. Here's how.

Discover your core values

Leaving a field for which you've spent years training is unnerving. It can lead to questioning long-cherished goals in both your personal and professional life.

This may sound a little horrible, and ridden with a whole new set of crises, but it's actually the best way forward.

Michelle Dunn, a career coach and former teacher, says that any major career shift needs to be preceded by a genuine reflection about one's core strengths and values. "The next thing that happens to pop up may not be the best thing," she cautions. "When career coaching, we start with who the person is, what's important to them and their strengths. Getting really clear about those things will help you leverage your skills to turn to something else."

Identify your transferrable skills

Identifying those skills can be difficult coming from a field defined so much by what seems like just one duty: teach stuff. But teachers employ a mass of skills getting a class of 14-year-olds ready to sit down and write an essay on Romeo and Juliet, urbanization or the electoral process.

Teachers research, transfer knowledge, manage diverse groups of individuals, learn new software, evaluate performance, participate in professional development activities, facilitate, work independently and exercise authority.

They also engage in public speaking, presenting complex topics to rowdy audiences!

When writing a cover letter or resumé, the trick, as always, is to disassociate the tasks from the setting. The setting will change, but the tasks essentially remain the same. As Michelle points out: "If you can maintain discipline and leadership in a classroom of 30 kids, you can definitely do that in an organization."

Consider the "helping professions"

Of course, the easiest transition occurs when your skills transfer so naturally it doesn't seem like a daunting change at all.

For teachers, a natural transition is into what

A successful switch

Fifteen years ago, Cam McRae left an established teaching career in Vancouver to start an e-magazine for mountain biking in the North Shore area.

- It was a bold move for someone who didn't know much about creating websites or managing a business. But he had just returned from a year of teaching (and riding) in Italy, which gave him a new perspective on what he wanted to do for the rest of his life.
- His website, NSMB.com, now boasts a sizeable following and several heavyweight sponsors in the outdoor industry. He still holds on to his teaching credentials, just in case, but he doesn't regret his career move.
- His advice for current teachers considering a similar 180?:"It depends on your employment and family responsibilities. But generally my advice is to go for it; we regret more what we don't do than what we do. Also, the flexibility of teaching – summers, holidays — can allow you to start developing your new interest on the side at first. So take advantage of that."

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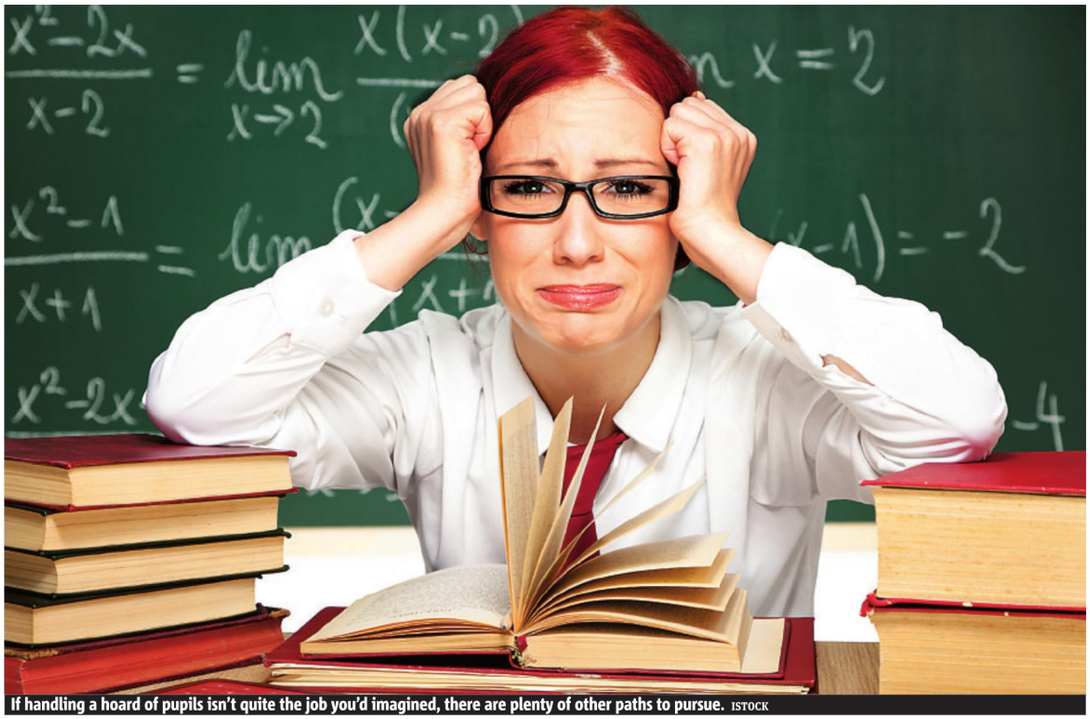

If handling a hoard of pupils isn't quite the job you'd imagined, there are plenty of other paths to pursue. ISTOCK

Michelle calls "helping professions": training, coaching or advising roles, either within the education sector, but outside the classroom, or in a department with a strong people-focused mandate, like human resources.

Michelle has led plenty of workshops for teachers moving into these fields. She says it's a natural transition since "they want to help people and see them reach their potential," and that's what they're already adept at. In her own case, Michelle moved into career coaching after teaching abroad for four years and raising two children. It offered a way to build naturally on her interests in counseling and psychology — part of her B.A. work — and "still do what I loved and knew how to do."

You've got the goods

"If you can maintain discipline and leadership in a classroom of 30 kids, you can definitely do that in an organization."

Michelle Dunn
Career coach and former teacher

Embrace entrepreneurism

Finally, there's a strong case to be made for the unknown — following that other passion and seeing where it leads. This may involve obtaining new credentials along the way, but it can also be done by drawing on the extraordinary work ethic and nerve honed in the classroom.

Contrary to the popular belief that says teachers can't cut it in the cruel world of business, Michelle argues that teachers are native entrepreneurs. They have intuition, drive, excellent people skills and loads of self-direction. These are the skills needed to start something new and develop it into a sustainable livelihood.

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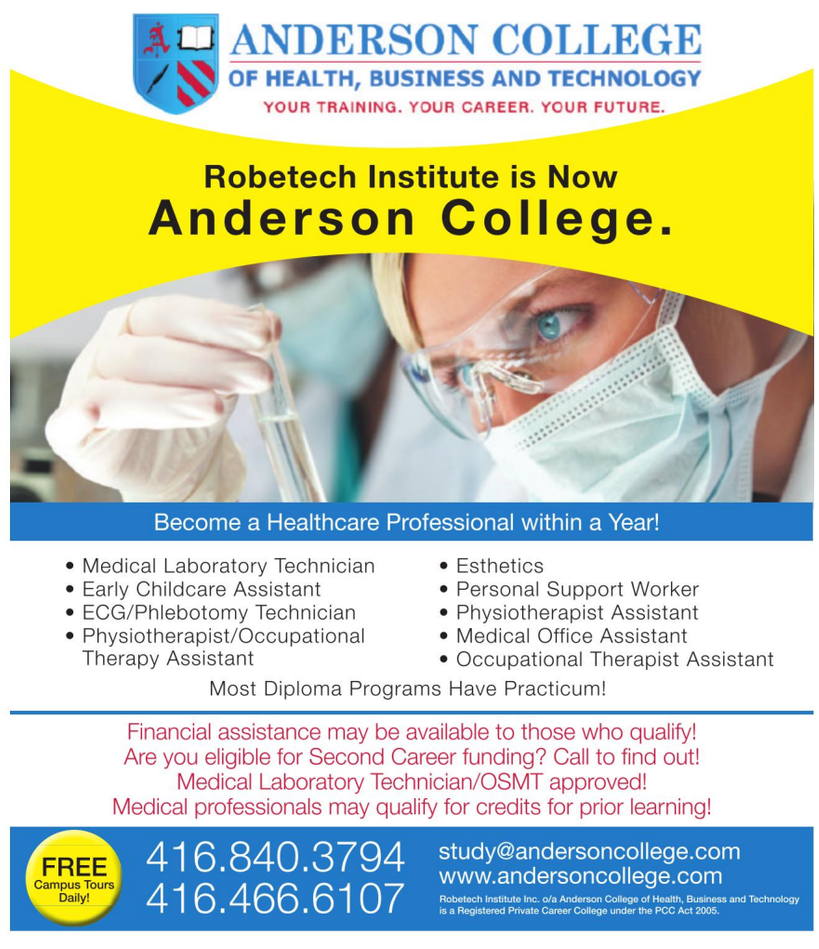
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Mission of the mentee: Getting a hold of your guru of greatness

Finding "the one".
Taking the first steps toward finding your perfect mentor

ROSIE HALES
TalentEgg.ca

Sometimes a boost can be just what you need to jump start your career and finding a mentor might be the way to do just that.

The mentor-mentee relationship is a precious one. The mentor can coach their mentee in their chosen field and open up a whole variety of opportunities to them, while the mentee keeps their teacher abreast of current feelings and developments of the age group in that industry.

After you've decided what you might look for in a mentor (think: someone you like who works in your field of interest and, as an added bonus, has a strong network within the industry), try to brainstorm where you could meet said person. Here are some to start you off:

Where to meet a mentor

Networking events

Where job skills meet people skills.
GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE
georgebrown.ca

Asking someone to be your mentor may overwhelm them, as they won't know what that entails. Start with simply asking someone you respect for advice. ISTOCK

Pick up that phone!

Keep them posted on your progress

- If your mentor helped you with a certain problem or question, then drop them a line every so often to let them know how they helped you solve it and what you're doing now.
- It lets them know just how valuable their advice really was.

Signing up for networking events can be a really great way to meet potential mentors and it's a useful strategy to get your foot in the door of your industry of interest.

School

Universities or colleges often employ industry professionals to teach classes and making use of these connections to the outside world can provide you with a mentor that understands the culture of the classroom and of the workplace.

Social media

Do you have a blog or Twitter account that you love to follow? If someone is posting things that are both interesting and relevant to your chosen field, they probably have other information that they'd love to share with you!

What to do once you've met a potential mentor

Ask for advice, not mentorship

Hatch your relationship by asking your potential mentor for advice about something, instead of making the overly formal request of "Will you be my mentor?" With any luck, your relationship will blossom from there.

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4 SPORTS

NBA

$48M from Lakers 'easy to accept,' Bryant says

Wearing his practice shorts and a sweatshirt, Kobe Bryant looked as if he was ready to return action.

After the Los Angeles Lakers signed the fourth-leading scorer in NBA history to a two-year, $48-million contract extension, the injured Bryant said Tuesday in Washington he can't wait to play.

"The Lakers came up with the structure — a system and a plan they thought was a win-win for everybody involved. From my perspective, it was very easy to accept it," Bryant said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

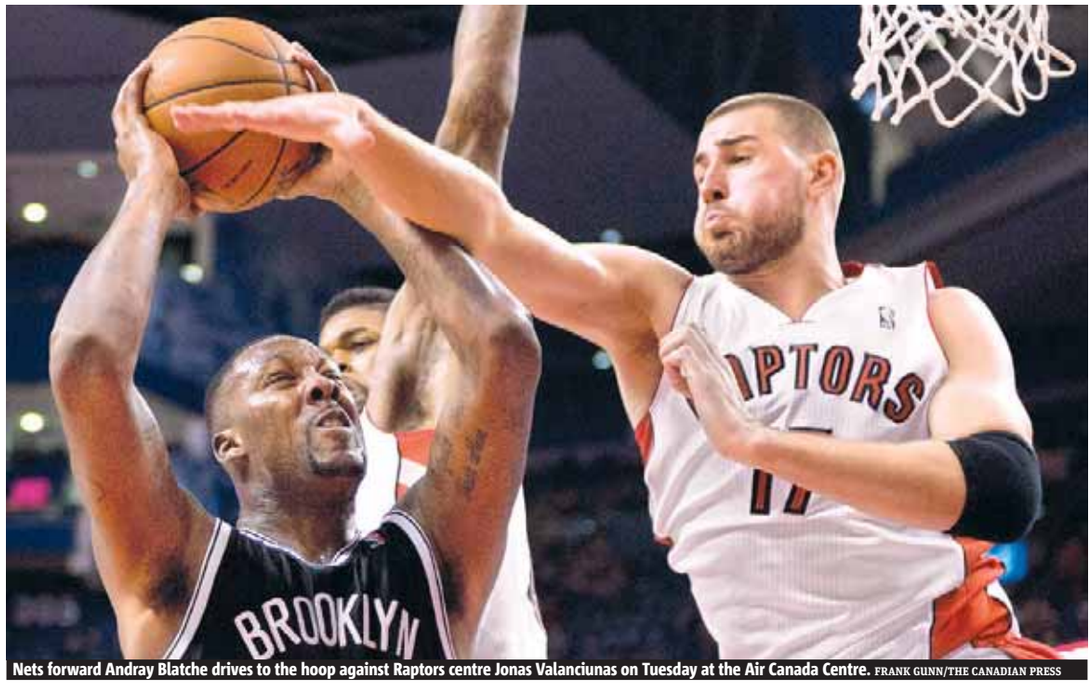
Kobe Bryant THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tennis Canada

Bouchard named female player of the year

Montreal's Eugenie Bouchard has been named Tennis Canada's female player of the year after an impressive debut professional season.

The 19-year-old climbed over 100 spots on the WTA rankings to end the year at No. 32. She reached her first WTA final at Osaka in October, defeated four top-15 players throughout the course of the season, and was named WTA Newcomer of the Year. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Nets forward Andray Blatche drives to the hoop against Raptors centre Jonas Valanciunas on Tuesday at the Air Canada Centre. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Two-man show not enough for Raptors

NBA. 51 points between DeRozan, Lowry can't get Dinos past Nets

On Tuesday

Nets	Raptors
102	100

DeMar DeRozan poured in 27 points while Kyle Lowry had 24, but the two had little help from their Toronto Raptors teammates in a 102-100 loss to the Brooklyn Nets on Tuesday.

Andray Blatche had 24 to top the injury-depleted Nets (4-10), who came into the game on a five-game losing streak and with the third-worst record in the NBA. Joe Johnson had 21 points, Paul Pierce had 16 and Kevin Garnett added 12 points with six rebounds.

The Nets were missing Deron Williams (sprained ankle) Andrei Kirilenko (back spasms) and leading scorer Brook Lopez (sprained left ankle).

But it was the Raptors (6-8) who could have used some more help. Steve Novak was the only other player to score in double figures with 12 for the Atlantic Division leaders, who lost for the first time in three games. Rudy Gay had nine points, while Tyler Hansbrough and Jonas Valanciunas had seven rebounds apiece.

The Nets had assembled a 15-point lead with a little more than five minutes to go and the game seemed out of reach, but the Raptors came to life in the final two minutes. Gay drained a three with 24 seconds remaining to pull the Raptors to 101-100.

Shaun Livingston missed one of two free throws with 11 seconds left, but Amir Johnson's three-point attempt on the Raptors' last shot clanged off the rim.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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i'm lovin' it

Leafs look to prove it's not all been luck

NHL. Coming off blowout by Columbus, Toronto prepares to face high-powered Penguins

Randy Carlyle takes his struggling Leafs into Pittsburgh for a Wednesday clash with the Penguins. RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The question never seemed to go away.

Were the Toronto Maple Leafs good or "lucky" to be at 14-9-1 and fourth overall in the Eastern Conference? Begrudgingly, the Leafs may now be willing to allow the "luck" part to enter the equation.

"I think we're a little fortunate," Nazem Kadri said Tuesday as the Leafs regrouped from Monday night's 6-0 thrashing from Columbus.

"But at the same time, we're working on it and we're coming out with wins. Everyone is imagining what we'd be like if we put together 60 minutes of Toronto Maple Leaf hockey."

That consistency has eluded the Leafs much of the season.

Toronto ranks third-worst in the NHL in both shots-for per game (26.2) and shots-against per game (35.6). That has given way to concern that the club's record is largely a reflection of the success of its goalies.

Part of the Leafs' formula for success included some excellent work on special teams early in the season. But Toronto, which had one of the NHL's better goal differentials earlier this month, has levelled out now (63 goals for, 59 against).

Coach Randy Carlyle alluded to the "lucky" theme that has hovered over the club.

"It's been stated numerous times that we've been lucky ... our goaltending and our special teams have been winning us hockey games when the shot clock was lopsided," Carlyle said. "And we haven't been ready enough and that's a sign that we have to change some things we are doing to prepare and implement them on a daily basis."

The Leafs will be without top-six forward Joffrey Lupul, who is nursing a groin injury, when they take on the Penguins in Pittsburgh on Wednesday night. The severity was to be determined after an MRI Tuesday, but Carlyle was not optimistic with a day-to-day time table for Lupul.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Riders roll through Regina with Grey Cup

Saskatchewan head coach Corey Chamblin poses with the Grey Cup during the Roughriders' championship parade through Regina on Tuesday afternoon. LIAM RICHARDS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

New criticism of Selig added to A-Rod's lawsuit

Alex Rodriguez's lawyers updated his lawsuit against Major League Baseball and Bud Selig, adding new criticism of the commissioner for not testifying in the union's grievance to overturn the 211-game suspension given to the Yankees star. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baseball hall of fame

Maddux headlines new hopefuls

Four-time Cy Young Award winner Greg Maddux, two-time winner Tom Glavine and two-time AL MVP Frank Thomas are among 19 newcomers on this year's Hall of Fame ballot, joining steroid-tainted holdovers Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa.

Ballots are due by Dec. 31, and results will be announced Jan. 8.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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‘Open-minded’ is Byrd’s new word

NFL. Pro Bowl safety won’t rule out a future with Bills past this year

Bills safety Jairus Byrd celebrates one of his two interceptions against the Jets on Nov. 17. GETTY IMAGES

Bills safety Jairus Byrd has gone from being noncommittal to open-minded in softening his outlook about his future in Buffalo.

Though far from ready to commit to signing a long-term contract on Tuesday, the two-time Pro Bowl player — for the first time this season — wasn’t ruling out the possibility, either.

“Sure, anything can happen. You never want to close the door to anything,” Byrd said. “I’m just keeping my mind open.”

That’s a big step forward for Byrd. As recently as three months ago, he was sidestepping questions about whether he wanted to be traded, and expressing disappointment over the team’s decision to apply a one-year franchise tag in March.

“I don’t want to go back and re-track where I was,” Byrd said. “But at this point, all I can answer is you asked me how I felt right now, and I’m open-minded.”

Byrd was careful to point out the decision is not entirely his, noting the Bills will have a say in the matter once the two sides are allowed to open talks following the season.

“It’s not totally up to me,” he said. “I can’t say, ‘Yeah, I’m going to be here’ or whatever. It’s great to say I’m open-minded, which I am, but that’s really as far as I can go.”

The Bills haven’t wavered in their desire to re-sign Byrd, and haven’t ruled out the possibility of applying the franchise tag once more this off-season. The question remains whether the two sides can find a common ground after failing to reach a deal this past year.

In retaining Byrd’s rights, the Bills failed to lock him up to a long-term contract. Byrd missed nearly the entire off-season before signing his one-year, $6.9 million franchise tender in late August.

Buffalo (4-7) faces the Atlanta Falcons (2-9) on Sunday in the Bills’ annual “home” game at Toronto. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	24	16	6	2	68	46	34
Tampa Bay	24	15	8	1	72	61	31
Toronto	24	14	9	1	66	60	29
Detroit	25	11	7	7	63	70	29
Montreal	24	13	9	2	64	51	28
Ottawa	24	9	11	4	68	77	22
Florida	25	7	13	5	56	81	19
Buffalo	25	5	19	1	44	79	11

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	25	15	9	1	72	58	31
Washington	24	12	10	2	72	68	26
NY Rangers	24	12	12	0	48	59	24
New Jersey	24	9	10	5	50	58	23
Carolina	24	9	10	5	49	67	23
Philadelphia	23	10	11	2	50	56	22
Columbus	24	9	12	3	62	71	21
NY Islanders	24	8	13	3	68	82	19

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	25	17	4	4	92	71	38
St. Louis	23	17	3	3	82	50	37
Colorado	22	17	5	0	69	45	34
Minnesota	25	15	6	4	64	58	34
Nashville	24	12	10	2	56	69	26
Winnipeg	26	11	11	4	69	76	26
Dallas	22	11	9	2	61	65	24

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	26	17	6	3	80	65	37
San Jose	23	15	3	5	79	52	35
Los Angeles	25	16	6	3	67	53	35
Phoenix	24	14	6	4	80	78	32
Vancouver	26	12	9	5	67	68	29
Calgary	23	8	11	4	64	84	20
Edmonton	25	7	16	2	65	89	16

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

Tuesday’s result
Anaheim at Dallas

Monday’s results
Winnipeg 3 New Jersey 1
Boston 4 Pittsburgh 3 (OT)
Columbus 6 Toronto 0
Florida 3 Philadelphia 1
Tampa Bay 5 NY Rangers 0
Nashville 4 Phoenix 2
St. Louis 3 Minnesota 0
Chicago 5 Edmonton 1
Los Angeles 3 Vancouver 2 (OT)

Wednesday’s games — All Times Eastern
Nashville at Columbus, 7 p.m.
Winnipeg at NY Islanders, 7 p.m.
Ottawa at Washington, 7 p.m.
Montreal at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
Carolina at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
NY Rangers at Florida, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay, 7:30 p.m.
Toronto at Pittsburgh, 7:30 p.m.
Boston at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
St. Louis at Colorado, 9 p.m.
Chicago at Calgary, 10 p.m.
Los Angeles at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pt
Crosby, Phg	13	18	31
Steen, StL	19	10	29
Zetterberg, Det	10	18	28
Ovechkin, Wash	20	7	27
Getzlaf, Ana	13	14	27
Tavares, NYI	10	17	27
Malkin, Phg	4	23	27
Kane, Chi	13	13	26
Perry, Ana	13	12	25
H. Sedin, Van	7	18	25
Little, Win	12	12	24
Toews, Chi	12	12	24
St. Louis, TBL	10	14	24
Karlsson, ott	7	17	24
Benn, Dal	7	17	24
Backstrom, Wash	5	19	24
Thornton, SJ	2	22	24
Stamkos, TBL	14	9	23
Seguin, Dal	12	11	23
Datsyuk, Det	12	11	23
Marleau, SJ	11	12	23
Couture, SJ	8	15	23
Kopitar, LA	7	16	23
Ryan, ott	11	11	22
Parise, Min	11	11	22
Kunitz, Phg	11	11	22

Not including last night’s games

MLS

MLS CUP

Saturday, Dec. 7
Sporting KC vs. Real Salt Lake, 4 p.m.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	13	1	.929	—
Miami	11	3	.786	2
Atlanta	8	7	.533	5 1/2
Toronto	6	8	.429	7
Charlotte	7	8	.467	6 1/2
Chicago	6	7	.462	6 1/2
Detroit	6	8	.429	7
Washington	6	8	.429	7
Philadelphia	6	9	.400	7 1/2
Boston	6	10	.375	8
Orlando	5	9	.357	8
Cleveland	4	10	.286	9
Brooklyn	4	10	.286	9
New York	3	10	.231	9 1/2
Milwaukee	2	11	.154	10 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	13	1	.929	—
Portland	13	2	.867	1/2
Oklahoma City	9	3	.750	3
L.A. Clippers	10	5	.667	3 1/2
Houston	10	5	.667	3 1/2
Golden State	9	6	.600	4 1/2
Dallas	9	6	.600	4 1/2
Denver	7	6	.538	5 1/2
Memphis	7	7	.500	6
Minnesota	8	8	.500	6
Phoenix	7	7	.500	6
L.A. Lakers	7	8	.467	6 1/2
New Orleans	6	8	.429	7
Sacramento	4	9	.308	8 1/2
Utah	2	14	.125	12

Tuesday’s results
Washington 116 L.A. Lakers 111
Brooklyn 102 Toronto 100
Orlando 109 Atlanta 92
Golden State 102 New Orleans 101

Wednesday’s games — All Times Eastern
Indiana at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Philadelphia at Orlando, 7 p.m.
Memphis at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
Miami at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Atlanta at Houston, 8 p.m.
Washington at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.
San Antonio at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m.
Denver at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
Golden State at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Portland at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
New York at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.

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2014 BMW 4-Series

Review. Sometimes you need to break away to really come into your own

MALCOLM GUNN
wheelbasemedia.com

ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM

It's a breakup of a different sort.

BMW's newest two-door model has separated from its former 3 Series sedan counterpart, changed its name, undergone a major facelift and emerged as one of the more attractive models in the automaker's lineup.

The 4 Series represents part of BMW's master strategy of re-branding the coupe and convertible lineup using even-number nomenclature exclusively (2, 4 and 6), while the sedan range sticks with odd numbers (3, 5 and 7).

For the 2015 model year the current 1 Series vehicles will be rebooted as 2 Series coupes and convertibles. The newly christened 4 Series appears to have strayed only slightly from the previous 3 Series, but is a bit wider and longer.

The changes that have occurred in the 4-Series lower the car's centre of gravity and, along with a number of structural and suspension adjustments specific to it, are aimed at providing a more sporting experience along with creating a sharper personal-luxury image.

Don't look for any dramatic changes when it comes to the 4 Series powertrains that are already in use in a number of BMWs. The 428i uses a turbocharged 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine that cranks out 241 horsepower and 260 pound-feet of torque.

Moving up to the 435i puts you in control of a 3.0-litre six-cylinder engine that generates 300 horsepower and 300 pound-feet of torque. By BMW's stopwatch, the 428i will propel the coupe to 60 mph in 6.0 seconds, while the stronger 435i gets it done in 5.3 seconds. To help conserve fuel, there's a standard stop/start function that shuts off the engine when the car is stopped, which of course saves fuel.

An eight-speed automatic is the base choice with either engine, but you can swap it out for a six-speed manual gearbox, should you be so inclined. You can also equip each edition with BMW's x-Drive all-wheel-drive option that's probably a wise move in this country where winter is a fact of life. From the driver and front passenger's perspective there's little to differentiate the 4 Series Coupe from its former sedan mate. The controls and switches are legible to a fault and convey a keen sense of quality.

Both front and rear-seat riders (there's room for just two in the split-folding back seat) sit on standard Sensatec (faux leather) upholstery and have ample views out the generously sized front and side windows. That's in sharp contrast to cars such as the Audi TT coupe. Selecting a base 428i will set you back $47,000 ($57,000 for the 435i) and includes premium items such as climate control with memory settings, power moonroof, eight-way power front seats, rain-sensing wipers and run-flat tires, which gets rid of a traditional spare.

However, that's just the warm-up. Each model can be upgraded with Luxury Line, Sport Line and M Sport trims, with the latter including an aerodynamic body kit, sporty 18-inch wheels (17-inchers are standard) and well-bolstered sport seats covered in premium leather.

Historically, BMW purchasers have had no problem adding these and other extra-cost toppings (even selecting metallic paint is optional) and that will likely hold true with the sleek and sassy 4 Series coupe and soon-to-follow hardtop convertible.

After all, combining significant luxury, performance and style is what really makes sets these cars and their owners apart.

2014 BMW 4-Series

- **Type.** Two-door, rear- /all-wheel-drive four-passenger coupe
- **Engines (hp).** 2.0-litre DOHC I4, turbocharged (241); 3.0-litre DOHC I6, turbocharged (300)
- **Transmissions.** Eight-speed automatic; six-speed manual (opt.)
- **Base price (incl. destination).** $47,000

Design

Compared to the 3 Series sedan, the roofline is lower by about five centimetres and the ride height has been reduced by about 1.5 centimetres. The fenders also bulge more than the sedan's, and the space between the front and rear axles has increased a bit

Compare

1 Audi A5
Base price: $46,100

2 Cadillac CTS coupe
Base price: $44,850

5 DRIVE

Tech-ing time to settle, latest in-car gadgetry not as smart as you think

Problems. Complaints coming from all major demograhics unhappy with infotainment and connectivity within their vehicles

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
drive@metronews.ca

Vehicles are turning into smart phones and that's having a profound effect on vehicle interiors, and in many cases, the driver's dissatisfaction with such interiors.

And the complaints are not just coming from grumpy old men who would rather trowel grout than tweet.

According to consumer research conducted by J.D. Power and Associates, all major demographic bulges (boomers, Gen X, Gen Y), are having issues with the quality and design of some of the connectivity and infotainment systems in today's vehicles. In fact, the younger generations are harder to please because they self identify as tech-savvy, multi-tasking experts and expect instant action and satisfaction with all of their techie devices.

It's a case of, "we like all the technology, but it's not working as brilliantly and easily as advertised." And we really want these things to work, because we're spending more and more time in our vehicles.

Mike VanNieuwkuyk, Executive Director, Global Quality Practice, J.D. Power, recently held fourth on this "in-car experience" topic at the 2013 TalkAUTO conference in Toronto, and noted that, these days, more malfunctions are happening in the navigation and infotainment areas than anywhere else on the vehicle.

In addition to outright malfunctions, his firm also identified a large source of irritants that is more related to bad design than it is to things breaking down. One irritant group was characterized as "soft inadequacies, where needs are addressed but not as preferred" (I only wish I made that up). Another irritant group is tech stuff that is just misaligned with expectations.

The 2015 Audi A3 Sedan is a WiFi hot spot and will be the first to offer 4GT LTE service inside a vehicle. PHOTO: AUDI

A lot of voice command issues fall into these two groups. VanNieuwkuyk said customers complain about the technology profusely, but rank it only second to "touch screen" as the preferred way to control their navigation systems: "Even though many think voice command is terrible, they still want it," said VanNieuwkuyk. "They're waiting for someone to do it right."

After VanNieuwkuyk's report, several automobile dealers assembled on stage to discuss current and various automotive industry trends from their perspective, and it was soon apparent that dealerships are finding themselves on the sharp end of the stick, when it comes to customers' frustrations and learning curves with in-car technologies. Even though they didn't say it outright, you got the sense they felt the automakers weren't doing their share, in educating their customers on how all these complex systems work.

But the dealers had some really good ideas about how to deliver some of the training and information customers need. Because there is just not enough time to demonstrate how everything works when customers take their cars home for the first time, they had to get creative. One dealer conducts a "second delivery" right at the customer's home. Another encourages salespeople to stay in touch with customers 24/7 via smart phones. Another thought that owner manuals should be converted to a series of short videos, which could be uploaded to youtube or available as smart phone apps. Another dealer was contemplating something like the Apple Genius Bar.

I hope these ideas work, and I hope grumpy old men will always feel free to express themselves.

Funny how used market can set new car prices

Key factor. Automakers releasing a new model will refer to amount of secondhand vehicles available before putting price tag on it

JIL MCINTOSH
Drive@metronews.ca

There are numerous factors that go into the price of a new car, including how much it costs to build it, how many options it has, and if it's imported, the rate of currency exchange.

But there's also an important consideration that you may not realize: the number of used cars that will be on the market when that new model goes on sale.

Used car prices will affect the price of brand new vehicles. JIL MCINTOSH

"New-vehicle prices have come down in recent years, and are actually below where they were in 2007," says Carlos Gomes, senior economist and auto industry specialist for Scotiabank. "You'll start to see a change next year, and used cars are the key."

Used cars affect the price of new cars—and their price, in turn, is generally determined by how many there are available. The prime age is around four years old, when they're still new enough to appeal to most buyers in the secondary market, and when many of them are coming off leases. When there are fewer of these used vehicles available and demand for them is high, sellers can ask more money for them.

"Prior to the economic downturn of 2008 and 2009, we used to have around 600,000 vehicles that were leased annually," Gomes says. "That virtually collapsed and has been slow to recover, and a result, we're having a very significant shortage of used vehicles."

When used-car prices are high, and therefore closer to the cost of a brand-new car, many buyers are likely to spend a little extra to get the new one.

Manufacturers try to keep the difference as small as possible, either by setting lower prices or by offering incentives, so that buyers will choose the new model.

The automakers continually monitor annual car sales and leases, which gives them some idea of how many vehicles will enter the resale market in the future, and how that number will affect the price of used vehicles overall.

"Vehicle affordability is at one of the best levels ever, so it's a great time to buy a vehicle," Gomes says. "However, keep in mind that improved emissions technologies will start to be phased into vehicle prices as well, so expect that the trend of low prices on new cars is likely not here to stay."

The raw numbers

- **2013.** Canadians will buy approximately 1.73 million new vehicles in 2013.
- **Imports.** Canada normally imports between 150,000 and 200,000 used vehicles from the U.S. each year, but that number has dropped due to very low new-vehicle sales following the 2008 economic crash.
- **Downturn consequences.** Because of poor sales following the economic downturn, only some 6.5 per cent of all cars currently on the road in Canada are four years old.

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Suzuki's short-lived Kizashi rates highly

Second gear.
2010-2013
Suzuki Kizashi

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
drive@metronews.ca

Upscale in appearance, packing available All Wheel Drive (AWD) and offering a sporty and upscale alternative to machines like the Corolla, Civic and Focus, the Suzuki Kizashi was on sale to Canadians for only a few years before the brand ceased automotive business operations in Canada.

The Kizashi came with front-drive as standard and AWD as an option early on, before AWD was made standard. S, SX and Sport trim grades were applied to models from simple to basic.

Upscale feature content included automatic climate control, heated leather, one-touch windows, Bluetooth, memory seats, parking radar, a Rockford Fosgate stereo system and more.

Common issues

On board, scrutinize the cabin for any damaged or missing trim pieces, especially around the lower portion of the seats.

Confirm proper operation of all electronics, including the communication and multimedia systems.

When driving, "listen" to the suspension, especially at the rear of the vehicle, for signs of squeaking and creaking, which could indicate a worn-out or defective shock absorber.

A mechanic, or mechanically-inclined person, should visually inspect the rear shocks for signs of fluid leakage, too.

Some owners have complained of faulty operation from the available CVT transmission, possibly resulting in replacement of the transmission under warranty.

Information online is somewhat inconclusive, though shoppers are advised to stick to a front-drive, manual-equipped model for maximum confidence if possible — or exhaustively scrutinize the operation of a CVT-equipped model, noting any signs of surging, lagging, or any unwelcomed sensations.

A full drivetrain computer system scan is also advised.

Finally, some owners have reported issues with the serpentine belt tensioner, which may cause it to emit a grinding, whining sound as a precursor to failure.

CONTRIBUTED

What owners like

Common likes include the upscale looks both inside and out, good materials selection and overall appearance and character. The six-speed manual transmission is a favorite among driving enthusiasts, and audiophiles love the standard USB audio port.

What owners dislike

Common gripes include trunk hinges which eat up trunk space, the lack of an available up-level engine, and a sporty and firm ride. Some owners wish for better fuel-economy on AWD-equipped models.

Engine

Look for a 2.4 litre four-cylinder on all models, generating 180 or 185 horsepower depending on the year. Front-drive models could have a six-speed manual transmission, while all AWD models got a CVT transmission with manual mode.

The verdict

Kizashi owners appear to be a largely happy bunch who enjoy a car with above-average feature content and premium touches. A front-drive, manual-equipped model is likely your safest bet if common issues aren't present.

Stats reveal 2013's most-searched vehicles

Canadians had a lot to haul around in 2013, if the annual list of most sought after vehicles on autoTRADER.ca is any indication.

The latest statistics, released today by autoTRADER.ca, Canada's largest online marketplace for vehicles, include Top Ten lists of the most searched vehicles in each province across the country. With 200,594,817 searches, Ford's F-150 pickup truck was the most coveted vehicle in Canada throughout 2013, reclaiming the same spot it took in 2012.

While the F-150 gets the national nod, the Honda Civic ranked second, with 157,885,652 searches, while the Ford Mustang rounded out the top three with 97,828,334 searches (a full Top 10 list is below). Regionally, the F-150 was also the most searched vehicle in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario. The Civic took the top spot in Quebec and throughout the Maritimes, but was followed closely by the F-150 in those regions as well.

Trucks were a theme throughout Western Canada, with other makes and models such as the Toyota Tacoma, Dodge Ram 1500, GMC Sierra 1500 and Chevrolet Silverado all with strong showings in regional Top 10 lists in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Quoted

"Typically, drivers in urban centres like Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal are looking to buy with fuel economy in mind. And that's evident with the other makes and models that have made the list in those corresponding provinces."

Ian MacDonald, Director of Consumer Marketing at autoTRADER.ca

And while the F-150 took top honours in Ontario, the rest of Ontario's Top 10 was dominated by imports, with models from Honda, Audi, Mazda, Volkswagen and Porsche all making the cut.

Ian MacDonald, Director of Consumer Marketing at autoTRADER.ca, says that while the F-150 and other trucks are perennial favorites in Western Canada, where utilitarian demands run deep, the F-150's popularity in BC, Ontario and Quebec is a definite standout for 2013. "Typically, drivers in urban centres like Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal are looking to buy with fuel economy in mind. And that's evident with the other makes and models that have made the list in those corresponding provinces."

The data, MacDonald adds, also indicates that car buyers in the Prairies and Maritimes lean more toward domestic nameplates such as Ford, GMC, Chevy and Dodge, while imports rule in the rest of the country.

Ford's F-150 was also tops when it came to searches for cars with list prices of less than $20,000, followed by the Honda Civic and Accord. The Ford Mustang led the pack for searches of cars priced greater than $20,000, followed by the Porsche 911 and Audi A4. The Porsche 911 outpaced all others for searches of cars priced over $50,000. The BMW X6 and Lamborghini Gallardo round out the top three in that category.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Top 5 searched-for cars 2013

1. Ford F-150 200,594,817
2. Honda Civic 157,885,652
3. Ford Mustang 97,828,334
4. Mazda Mazda3 76,658,489
5. Porsche 911 72,288,578

NOVEMBER 27TH TO DECEMBER 2ND

BLACK FRIDAY sales event

GET TOTAL DISCOUNTS OF UP TO $10,000€

Five days. One event. Zero time to waste.

Price for 2014 Dodge Grand Caravan Crew Plus shown: $30,195.§

2014 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN CANADA VALUE PACKAGE

CANADA'S BEST-SELLING MINIVAN FOR 30 YEARS

2014 IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK

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$19,995•

PURCHASE PRICE INCLUDES $8,100 CONSUMER CASH,* FREIGHT, AIR TAX, TIRE LEVY AND OMVIC FEE. TAXES EXCLUDED. OTHER RETAILER CHARGES MAY APPLY.+

THE NEW 2014 RAM 1500 QUAD CAB SXT 4X4

AS GOOD AS 36 MPG HWY 7.8 L/100 KM

$26,295•

PURCHASE PRICE INCLUDES $8,500 CONSUMER CASH,* $1,500 BONUS CASH,* FREIGHT, AIR TAX, TIRE LEVY AND OMVIC FEE. TAXES EXCLUDED. OTHER RETAILER CHARGES MAY APPLY

Price for 2014 Ram 1500 Crew Cab Laramie shown: $40,190.§

Price for 2014 Jeep Cherokee Limited shown: $29,995.§

ALL-NEW 2014 JEEP CHEROKEE SPORT

$24,495• AND GET **0%** FINANCING† FOR 36 MONTHS

2013 IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK

AS GOOD AS 44 MPG HIGHWAY 5.4 L/100 KM HWY

2013 ULTIMATE JOURNEY PACKAGE

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- ParkView® rear back-up camera
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AS GOOD AS 37 MPG HIGHWAY 6.3 L/100 KM HWY

Price for 2013 Dodge Journey R/T AWD shown: $31,640.§

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+Your local retailer may charge additional fees for administration/pre-delivery that can range from $0 to $1,098 and anti-theft/safety products that can range from $0 to $1,298. Charges may vary by retailer.

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¤Based on 2013/2014 EnerGuide highway fuel consumption estimates. Government of Canada test methods used. Your actual fuel consumption will vary based on powertrain, driving habits and other factors. See retailer for additional EnerGuide details. 2014 Dodge Grand Caravan Canada Value Package – Hwy: 7.9 L/100 km (36 MPG) and City: 12.2 L/100 km (23 MPG). 2014 Jeep Cherokee 4x2 2.4 L I-4 Tigershark™ MultiAir® – Hwy: 6.4 L/100 km (44 MPG) and City: 9.6 L/100 km (29 MPG). 2013 Dodge Journey 2.4 L with 4-speed automatic – Hwy: 7.7 L/100 km (37 MPG) and City: 11.2 L/100 km (25 MPG). Wise customers read the fine print: €, •, *, », †, ◊, ∞, § The Black Friday Sales Event offers are limited time offers which apply to retail deliveries of selected new and unused models purchased from participating retailers between November 27 and December 2, 2013. Offers subject to change and may be extended without notice. All pricing includes freight ($1,595 – $1,695), air tax (if applicable), tire levy and OMVIC fee. Pricing excludes licence, insurance, registration, any retailer administration fees, other retailer charges and other applicable fees and taxes. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may sell for less. €$10,000 in Total Discounts is available on new 2014 Ram 1500 models (excluding Reg Cab) and consists of $8,500 in Consumer Cash Discounts and $1,500 in Ram Truck Loyalty/Conquest Bonus Cash. $4,125 in Total Discounts is available on the new 2013 Dodge Journey R/T model and consists of $2,000 Consumer Cash Discount, $1,000 Clearout Cash and $1,125 in Ultimate Journey Package Savings. See your retailer for complete details. •$19,995 Purchase Price applies to the new 2014 Dodge Grand Caravan Canada Value Package (29E) and includes $8,100 Consumer Cash Discount. $26,295 Purchase Price applies to the new 2014 Ram 1500 Quad Cab SXT 4x4 (25A+AGR) only and includes $8,500 Consumer Cash Discount and $1,500 Bonus Cash. $24,495 Purchase Price applies to the new 2014 Jeep Cherokee Sport 4x2 (24A) only. *Consumer Cash Discounts are offered on select 2013/2014 vehicles and are deducted from the negotiated price before taxes. »$1,500 Ram Truck Loyalty/Conquest Bonus Cash is available to qualified customers on the retail purchase/lease of any 2013/2014 Ram 2500/3500 models (excluding Cab & Chassis models) and 2014 Ram 1500 (excludes Reg Cab models) and is deducted from the negotiated price after taxes. Eligible customers include current owners/lessees of a Dodge or Ram pickup truck or any other manufacturer's pickup truck. The vehicle must have been owned/leased by the eligible customer and registered in their name on or before November 1, 2013. Proof of ownership/lease agreement will be required. Additional eligible customers include licensed tradesmen and those working towards Skilled Trade certification. Some conditions apply. See your retailer for complete details. †0% purchase financing for up to 36 months available on new 2013 Jeep Compass, Patriot, Dodge Dart, FIAT 500, 2014 FIAT 500L and on new 2014 Jeep Cherokee models to qualified customers on approved credit through Royal Bank of Canada, Scotiabank and TD Auto Finance. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may sell for less. See your retailer for complete details. Example: 2014 Jeep Cherokee Sport 4x2 (24A) with a Purchase Price of $24,495 with a $0 down payment, financed at 0% for 36 months equals 78 bi-weekly payments of $314.04 with a cost of borrowing of $0 and a total obligation of $24,495.0Ultimate Journey Package Discounts available at participating retailers on the purchase/lease of a new 2013 Dodge Journey R/T with Ultimate Journey Package (JCE549 28X with AGV, AV1, AS4, GWG). Discount consists of $1,125 in no-cost options that will be deducted from the negotiated price before taxes. Some conditions apply. See your retailer for complete details. ∞NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Contest begins November 27, 2013 at 9:00:00 a.m. ET and ends February 28, 2014 at 11:59:59 p.m. ET. Contest open to legal residents of Ontario who have reached the age of majority at the time of entry. One (1) entry per person. To enter, you must visit any participating Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge and Ram retailer during the contest period and purchase/finance/lease any new 2012, 2013 or 2014 Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge or Ram vehicle (excluding SRT Viper models). Four (4) grand prizes available to be won, each consisting of a pair of VIP tickets and trip to watch the 2014 Battle of Ontario in Ottawa on April 12, 2014. Tickets are for April 12 ONLY. Prize includes round trip travel for two and two night's hotel accommodation (if required). Approx. retail value: $5,000 per prize. Mathematical skill-testing question required. For complete contest rules, including no purchase means of entry, go to: www.chrysleroffers.ca/battleofontario. §2014 Dodge Grand Caravan Crew Plus shown. Price includes Consumer Cash Discount. 2014 Ram 1500 Crew Cab Laramie shown. Price includes Consumer Cash Discount and $1,500 Bonus Cash. 2014 Jeep Cherokee Limited shown. 2013 Dodge Journey R/T AWD shown. Price includes Consumer Cash Discount. »Based on *Automotive News* classification and 2013/2014 Ram 1500 3.6 L V6 4x2 and 8-speed transmission. 11.4 L/100 km (25 MPG) City and 7.8 L/100 km (36 MPG) Highway. Based on 2013 EnerGuide fuel consumption guide ratings published by Natural Resources Canada. Government of Canada test methods used. Your actual fuel consumption will vary based on powertrain, driving habits and other factors. Ask your retailer for complete EnerGuide information. ^Based on R. L. Polk Canada, Inc. May 2008 to September 2013 Canadian Total New Vehicle Registration data for Crossover Segments as defined by Chrysler Canada Inc. ❖Real Deals. Real Time. Use your mobile device to build and price any model. ®Jeep is a registered trademark of Chrysler Group LLC. ™The SiriusXM logo is a registered trademark of SiriusXM Satellite Radio Inc.

Let the wrap artists pimp your ride

Autoknow. An alternative to paint makes the impossible possible and just peels off when you want to make a change

TODD BURLAGE
wheelbasemedia.com

A heat gun stretches the wrap into tight areas so it will conform to the surface of the vehicle, then the excess is trimmed away.

From iridescent or glow-in-the-dark colours, to leopard-skin or zebra-stripe designs, vehicle wraps are changing the way folks with an eye for flair and a few bucks to spend are customizing their rides, all in an effort to make a bold statement with their head-turning ideas.

Unique styling options include the friendly clown-fish design from the Disney movie Finding Nemo, while others like the famous flames from the old Matchbox cars take a more macho approach.

Whatever your fancy or design agenda, the changing age of modern vehicle artistry is evolving from the old-school and expensive paint job to the more creative and relatively affordable full-body vinyl wrap.

Whether for advertising or for nothing more than personal preference, Bernie Michaud, president of INCOLOR, Inc., (incolor.ca) explains that vinyl wraps are quickly becoming the design option of choice for business and vehicle owners who crave visibility, with some flexibility.

"Instead of paying for an $8,000 paint job, you can do a wrap for about half of that," said Michaud. "And if you decide after a few years you want a different style, it's easy to remove (the wrap) and change it out."

Through advanced computer design and printing, the average car owner can add an intricate pattern, a personalized portrait or a scenic look to their vehicle that would be nearly impossible to paint or outrageously expensive to try.

Colours? Chrome, carbon fibre, lime-green, camouflage; feel free to use the imagination.

A flat or glossy paint look, a combination of the two? Again, there are no boundaries to these designs.

"It's mind-boggling the things you can do now with all the creative options the vinyl wraps offer," Michaud says. "There are tons of advantages going this route, and it's becoming more popular all the time."

Michaud said that the improving technology and durability for these vinyl vehicle wraps hasn't stopped moving in the five years his shop has offered the service.

From more-durable vinyl, to a growing catalog of vehicle templates, to longer-lasting ink, Michaud called the wrap business a "canvas on wheels" and a "rolling billboard."

Vehicle wrapping has become so sophisticated, do-it-yourself websites such as custom-car-wraps.com and superwraps.com offer the creative freedom to design a personalized look through a list of drop down menus with colour and pattern choices.

And while customization is a great touch to individual styling, Michaud says that the greatest advantage to the vehicle wrap over the traditional paint job, believe it or not, is defence against the elements.

"It gives protection from UV-rays, acid rain, light scratches . . .

"These give you great paint protection. It protects your investment and helps the vehicle hold its resale value."

And business and vehicle owners are taking notice. We've all seen the pink Mary Kay Cadillacs rolling around town? They're now "pink wrapped" instead of painted so when their cosmetic career reaches the end of the road, the vinyl shell can be easily removed to unveil a more desirable silver or grey paint scheme underneath.

If done professionally, the wrapping process is relatively simple. There are basically two methods: partial; and full body.

Quoted

"Instead of paying for an $8,000 paint job, you can do a wrap for about half of that. And if you decide after a few years you want a different style, it's easy to remove (the wrap) and change it out."

Bernie Michaud, president of INCOLOR, Inc.

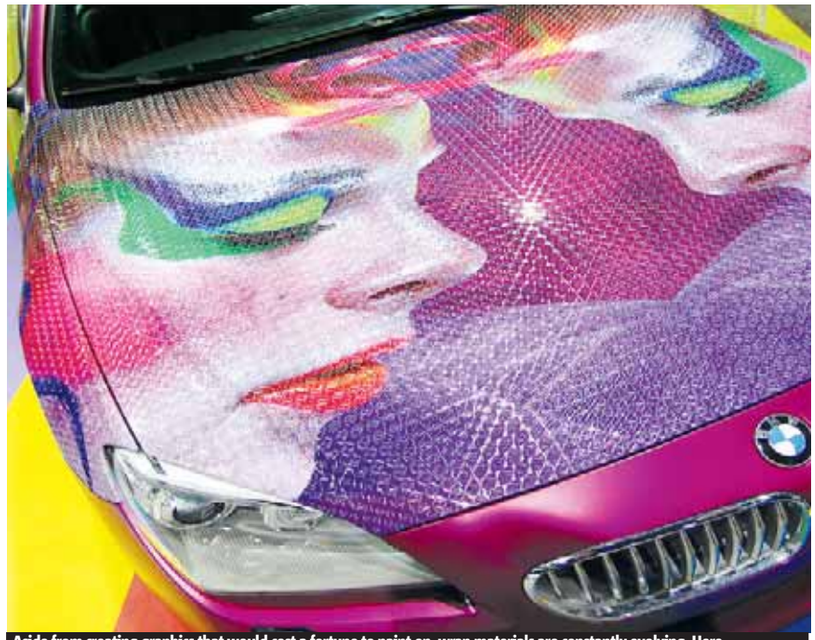
A partial wrap will "decorate" only a specific area of the vehicle, such as the hood and/or the doors. This cost-cutting approach is typically used for advertising with company logos, graphics and colours with the vehicle's existing paintjob as the colour background.

Full-body wraps are just that; a bumper-to-bumper design that covers the entire body of the vehicle and gives it an entirely new look.

Wraps are also being used more on back windows with a special kind of perforated vinyl that allows the driver to see out, but shows only the design from the outside looking in.

"This is a fast-growing business and I truly don't see any negatives," Michaud said. "We have only been doing this for about four or five years and the material has already gotten so much better."

Five-year warranties that protect against peeling and bubbling are fairly standard in the wrap business but Michaud said that if properly installed, the lifespan can stretch to about 10 years. The ink on logos and graphics tends to fade some before that, especially in sunny and harsher climates.



Aside from creating graphics that would cost a fortune to paint on, wrap materials are constantly evolving. Here, from kklabelusa.com, there's a hologram effect that looks rather bizarre in person. ALL IMAGES WHEELBASE

Taste notwithstanding, this complicated pattern would cost a fortune to paint on a vehicle. With a wrap it doesn't matter whether it's a solid colour or a weird 'camo-maro' pattern as the material cost is the same per square foot.

Quoted

"It gives protection from UV-rays, acid rain, light scratches. These give you great paint protection. It protects your investment and helps the vehicle hold its resale value."

Bernie Michaud, president of INCOLOR, Inc.

As a word of warning for those interested in a vehicle wrap, Michaud says to never install one that hasn't been coated with a laminate to help protect the ink from quick fading.

And cost? A good estimate is from $7 to $8.50 per square foot for the digitally designed wrap with lamination, and the professional install costs about $2.50 to $3 per square foot.

All tallied, a full-body wrap for a full-size van will run about $4,000, a pickup truck about $3,500 and a standard passenger car about $3,000. But given the advertising visibility and advantages, Michaud said these wraps pay for themselves many times over.

"You get so much more advertising bang for your dollar," he said.

So whether it's to showcase your hotrod or to promote your retail business, the vinyl wrap is finding a tight fit on its place in vehicle design.

Ford

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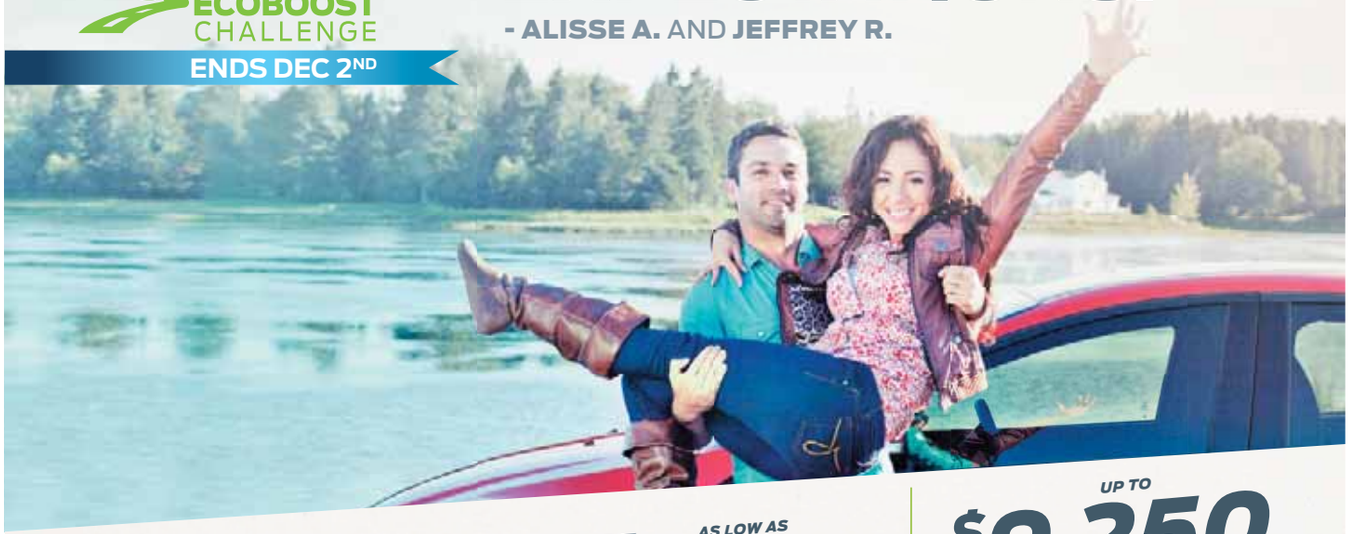

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2014 Fiesta SE model shown

2014 FIESTA S

PURCHASE FINANCE FOR **$79**** @ **0.99%** APR

Bi-weekly for 84 months with $2,150 down.

OR OWN FOR ONLY **$16,058***

Offer excludes taxes.

5.2L/100km 54MPG HWY^ / 7.4L/100km 38MPG CITY^

2013 FOCUS S

OWN FOR ONLY **$14,498***

Offer includes $3,000 in manufacturer rebates.

Offer excludes taxes.

5.5L/100km 51MPG HWY^ / 7.8L/100km 36MPG CITY^

2014 ESCAPE S

PURCHASE FINANCE FOR **$148**** @ **2.49%** APR

Bi-weekly for 84 months with **$0** down.

OR OWN FOR ONLY **$24,888***

Offer includes $750 Winter Safety Package cash alternative and $500 in manufacturer rebates. Offer excludes taxes.

6.3L/100km 45MPG HWY^ / 9.5L/100km 30MPG CITY^

F-150 Platinum 4x4 model shown

2013 F-150 XLT SuperCrew 4x4

LEASE FOR ONLY **$399***** @ **1.99%** APR

For 24 months with $1,900 down.

OR OWN FOR ONLY **$31,858***

Offer includes **$9,250** in manufacturer rebates. Offer excludes taxes.

10.6L/100km 27MPG HWY^ / 15.0L/100km 19MPG CITY^

PLUS

For a limited time get a

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With the purchase or lease of select new 2013 and 2014 models. (If $750 Winter Safety Package cash alternative not applied.)

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SiriusXM

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Vehicle(s) may be shown with optional equipment. Dealer may sell or lease for less. Limited time offers. Offers may be cancelled at any time without notice. See your Ford Dealer for complete details or call the Ford Customer Relationship Centre at 1-800-565-3673. For factory orders, a customer may either take advantage of eligible Ford retail customer promotional incentives/offers available at the time of vehicle factory order or time of vehicle delivery, but not both or combinations thereof. † Until December 2, 2013, receive 0% APR purchase financing on new 2013 Ford Edge (excluding SE) for up to 48 months; 2014 Ford Taurus for up to 60 months; 2014 Fiesta for up to 72 months to qualified retail customers, on approved credit (OAC) from Ford Credit. Not all buyers will qualify for the lowest interest rate. Example: $25,000 purchase financed at 0% APR for 48/60/72 months, monthly payment is $520.83/ $416.66/ $347.22, cost of borrowing is $0 or APR of 0% and total to be repaid is $25,000. Down payment on purchase financing offers may be required based on approved credit from Ford Credit. Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price. * Until December 2, 2013. Purchase a new [2014 Escape S FWD/2014 Fiesta S Hatch]/[2013 Focus S Sedan / 2013 F-150 XLT SuperCrew 4x4/ 2013 F-150 SuperCrew Platinum 4x4 5.0L] for [$24,888/$16,058]/ [$14,498/ $31,858/$48,080] (after Manufacturer Rebate of [$500/$0]/[$3,000 / $9,250/ $9,250] and Winter Safety Package cash alternative of [$750/$0/$0/$0] deducted). Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price after total manufacturer rebate has been deducted and after Winter Safety Package cash alternative has been deducted. Offers include freight and air tax but exclude administration and registration fees of up to $799, fuel fill charge of up to $120 and all applicable taxes. All prices are based on Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. Delivery Allowances are not combinable with any fleet consumer incentives. ** Until December 2, 2013, receive 2.49% APR purchase financing on new 2014 Escape S FWD models and receive 0.99 % APR purchase financing on new 2014 Fiesta S Hatch for up to 84 months, on approved credit (OAC) from Ford Credit. Not all buyers will qualify for the lowest interest rate. Example: 2014 Escape S FWD/ 2014 Fiesta S Hatch for $24,888/$16,058 (after $0/$2150 down payment or equivalent trade-in, $500/$0 Manufacturer Rebate, and $750/$0 Winter Safety Package Cash alternative deducted) purchase financed at 2.49%/0.99% APR for 84 months, monthly payment is $324/$172 (the sum of twelve (12) monthly payments divided by 26 periods gives payee a bi-weekly payment of $146/$79), interest cost of borrowing is $2,263/$495 or APR of 2.49%/0.99% and total to be repaid is $27,188/$14,376. Down payment may be required based on approved credit from Ford Credit. All purchase finance offers include freight and air tax and PPSA but exclude administration and registration fees of up to $799, fuel fill charge of up to $120 and all applicable taxes. All prices are based on Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. Delivery Allowances are not combinable with any fleet consumer incentives. *** Until December 2, 2013, lease a new 2013 Ford F-150 Super Crew XLT 4x4 for up to 24 months, and get 1.99% APR on approved credit (OAC) from Ford Credit. Not all buyers will qualify for the lowest APR payment. Lease the above-noted model with a value of $31,638 (after $1,300 down payment or equivalent trade in and $9,250 manufacturer rebate deducted) at 1.99% APR for up to 24 months with an optional buyout of $21,432, monthly payment is $399, total lease obligation is $19,176, interest cost of borrowing is $1,076, total obligation is $20,252 and total to be repaid is $20,252. Down payment may be required based on approved credit from Ford Credit. Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price after total manufacturer rebate has been deducted and after Winter Safety Package cash alternative has been deducted. Offers include freight and air tax but exclude administration and registration fees of up to $799, fuel fill charge of up to $120 and all applicable taxes. All prices are based on Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. Manufacturer rebates are not combinable with any fleet consumer incentives. ^ Estimated fuel consumption ratings for the 2013 Focus 2.0L I4 5-Speed Manual, 2014 Escape 2.5L I4 6-Speed Automatic, 2014 Fiesta 1.6L – I4 5-Speed Manual, 2013 F-150 4x4 5.0L – V8 6-Speed SST. Fuel consumption ratings based on Transport Canada-approved test methods. Model shown is 2013 F-150 4x4 5.0L – V8 6-Speed SST: 15.1L/100 km city and 10.7L/100 km hwy. Actual fuel consumption will vary based on road conditions, vehicle loading and driving habits. †† Receive a winter safety package which includes: four (4) winter tires, four (4) steel wheels and four (4) tire pressure monitoring sensors when you purchase or lease any new 2013/2014 Ford Focus (excluding S and Focus Electric), Escape, Fusion, Edge (excluding Sport), Explorer, or Fiesta (excluding S) on or before December 2, 2013. This offer is not applicable to any Fleet (other than small fleets with an eligible FIN) or Government customers and not combinable with CPA, GPC, CFIP or Daily Rental incentives. Some conditions apply. See Dealer for details. Vehicle handling characteristics, tire load index and speed rating may not be the same as factory supplied all-season tires. Winter tires are meant to be operated during winter conditions and may require a higher cold inflation pressure than all-season tires. Consult your Ford of Canada dealer for details including applicable warranty coverage. ‡ NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Open only to legal residents of Ontario who have reached 18 years of age. Toy Mountain gift or cash donation, or new Fusion test drive required to obtain an entry ballot. Five (5) prizes will be awarded in Ontario consisting of one (1) new 2014 Fusion SE Hybrid (approx. retail value of CAD$33,924) and four (4) $1000 cash prizes. One (1) entry permitted per donated unwrapped toy. One (1) entry permitted per online Toy Mountain donation (with proof). Limit one (1) no purchase necessary entry per person, per day. Odds of being selected as a finalist are solely dependent on the total number of ballots received. Odds of winning the vehicle prize as a finalist are 1 in 5. Contest closes Dec. 16/13. Skill-testing question required. Prize may not be exactly as shown. See dealer for full contest rules. ^ F-Series is the best-selling pickup truck in Canada for 47 years in a row based on Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association statistical sales report, December 2012. ©2013 Sirius Canada Inc. "SiriusXM") the SiriusXM logo, channel names and logos are trademarks of SiriusXM Radio Inc. and are used under licence. ©2013 Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited. All rights reserved.

2014 Corvette Stingray

ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM

2014 Corvette Stingray

- **Type.** Two-door, rear-wheel-drive coupe/roadster
- **Engine (hp).** 6.2-litre OHV V8 (455)
- **Transmissions.** Seven-speed manual; six-speed automatic (opt.)
- **Base price (incl. destination).** $54,450

Market position

The Corvette makes economic mincemeat out of the competition, excelling in design and total performance. A more sophisticated presence simply adds to the sports car's desirability.

Engineer Zora Arkus-Duntov and the first Sting Ray for 1963. The name is the only bit of nostalgia that makes it to the new car.

Points

Dramatic restyle controversial in some quarters, but should be lauded by most 'Vette fans; amazing power and fuel economy without fancy overhead cam layout; stunning interior update; sophisticated variable powertrain and suspension settings range from thrifty to track ready.

Compare

1 SRT Viper
Base price: $102,000
The performance gap might be closer than you think.

2 Nissan GT-R
Base price: $109,000
Ultra-quick AWD warrior is one of the few cars 'Vette owners should fear.

3 Jaguar F-Type
Base price: $78,250

Dream car. It's been 50 years since there was this much excitement over a new Corvette

MALCOLM GUNN
wheelbasemedia.com

Obviously, nothing becomes iconic overnight. It's a term that has to be earned, and the six-decade-old Chevrolet Corvette is deserving of that status and more.

The seventh-generation 2014 'Vette (few multi-syllable cars become as well-known for their abbreviated handles as for their proper names) maintains its brand mystique. In fact, adding the Stingray appellation is an acknowledgement that history and heritage are as important to the Corvette as its modern-day looks, advanced high-tech content and sizzling performance.

From any angle, the 2014 Stingray — Sting Ray was first used for the artful "split-window" 1963 'Vette — is all Corvette, all the time. The wedge-shaped body and grinning grille are symbolic of previous editions, yet most of the car is completely new.

The front fenders and hood (the latter made from carbon fibre) are dramatically shaped and the coupe's removable carbon-fibre top accentuates a more angular hatchback opening. Then there are the air-intake and heat-extraction vents on the hood, sides and atop the rear fenders that aren't just for show. And at long last, the Corvette's designers have fashioned a breathtaking rump, including an integrated spoiler, non-round taillights and quad exhaust-pipe outlets.

The sensational convertible is not merely a coupe without a roof, but a highly detailed sculpture that carries shapes and themes from the body to the interior and back. The soft top can be lowered remotely using the key fob and at vehicle speeds up to 50 km/h.

The dashing cockpit is therefore the design equal to the exterior, which is something the 'Vette faithful have waited a long time to see. Available carbon fibre, aluminum, suede and stitched leather trim is used, the steering-wheel diameter is reduced and the magnesium-framed seats are built for comfort as much as for support. The effect is dramatic and world-class all at once.

Equally dramatic are the Stingray's new bones. The stiffer chassis uses weight-reducing aluminum that's about 45 kilograms lighter than the previous steel structure (the Z06 model was aluminum, however), although total vehicle weight has increased by the same amount. It's also stronger, which means the convertible body requires no additional bracing and thus weighs about the same as the coupe.

Under the hood is a newly designed 6.2-litre LT1 V8 worth 455 horsepower and 460 pound-feet of torque. The previous 6.2 was rated at 430/424.

Direct fuel injection (new for Chevy V8 engines) and variable valve timing are key to the extra power with Chevrolet saying that the torque rating actually comes close to that of the larger 7.0-litre V8 found in the previous Z06 Corvette.

The gorgeous new interior, with real carbon fibre, will silence the critics. The Track mode is the loudest and most aggressive of the five driver settings. And there's a new seven-speed manual transmission.

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Limited time lease and finance offers available through Honda Financial Services Inc. (HFS), on approved credit. Selling prices and payments include freight and PDI (ranges from $1,495 to $1,640 depending on 2013 model and $1,695 on advertised 2014 models), EHF tires ($29), EHF filters ($1), A/C levy ($100 except Civic DX and Fit DX models), and OMVIC fee ($5). Taxes, license, insurance, registration, and excess wear and tear are extra. ΩRepresentative bi-weekly lease example: 2013 Civic DX Sedan // 2014 CR-V LX 2WD on a 60 month term with 130 bi-weekly payments at 1.99% // 2.99% lease APR. Bi-weekly payment is $88 // $139 with $0 // $1,177 down or equivalent trade-in, $66 // $0 individual dealer contribution deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes, $0 security deposit, and first bi-weekly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $11,439.71 // $19,247.03. 120,000 kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. PPSA lien registration fee of $45.93 and lien registering agent's fee of $5.65, due at time of delivery are not included. Limited time SE Accessory Package installed for $4.88 more bi-weekly (plus taxes) on a 2014 CR-V LX 2WD includes all advertised items plus "SE" badge. †Representative bi-weekly finance example: 2013 Civic DX Sedan on an 84 month term with 182 bi-weekly payments at 1.99% APR [including $1,600 Finance incentive and $476.65 individual dealer contribution deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes]. Incentives apply only to Finance contracts through HFS, and can be combined with subvented rates of interest offered by Honda as part of a low rate interest program. Finance amount is $14,939. Cost of borrowing is $1,077.28 for a total finance obligation of $16,016.28 with $0 down or equivalent trade-in. *$500 Holiday Bonus offer applies only to retail customer purchase or lease agreements for new 2013 Civic, 2013 Fit and 2014 CR-V models concluded between November 1st, 2013 and December 2nd, 2013 at participating Ontario Honda Dealers. Deducted from the negotiated price after taxes and can be combined with advertised lease and finance rates. µLimited time 0.99% APR lease offers on remaining new 2013 Fit DX // 2013 Civic DX Sedan // 2013 CR-Z // 2013 Accord EX Coupe 6MT // 2013 Accord LX Sedan 6MT // 2013 CR-V LX 2WD for a maximum of 24 // 24 // 24 // 42 // 24 // 36 months. Representative lease example: 2013 Civic DX Sedan on a 24 month term at 0.99% lease APR, the monthly payment is $287.20 with $0 down or equivalent trade-in, $0 security deposit and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $6,892.80. 48,000-kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. PPSA lien registration fee of $18.81 and lien registering agent's fee of $5.65, due at time of delivery are not included. ¨Receive 0.99% APR purchase financing on remaining new 2013 Fit DX // 2013 Civic DX Sedan // 2013 CR-Z // 2013 Accord EX Coupe 6MT // 2013 Accord LX Sedan 6MT // 2013 CR-V LX 2WD models for a maximum of 36 // 48 // 24 // 60 // 24 // 48 months. Representative finance example: 2013 Civic DX Sedan on a 24 month term at 0.99% APR and finance amount of $17,037.30 the monthly payment is $716.32. Cost of borrowing is $176.22 for a total finance obligation of $17,213.52 with $0 down or equivalent trade-in. •$1,500 // $1,500 // $3,000 // $1,500 // $2,000 // $3,500 // $2,000 // $2,500 // $4,000 // $5,000 // $5,000 customer cash incentive is valid on remaining new 2013 Fit (except DX) // 2013 Civic Coupe and Sedan (except DX Sedan) // 2013 Accord Coupe (except EX Coupe 6MT) // 2013 Accord Sedan (except LX Sedan 6MT, EX-L V6 Sedan and Touring V6 Sedan) // 2013 Accord EX-L V6 Sedan and Touring V6 Sedan // 2013 Crosstour EX 2WD and EX-L 2WD // 2013 Crosstour EX-L 4WD and EX-L 4WD NAVI // 2013 CR-V (except LX 2WD) // 2013 Odyssey // 2013 Pilot // 2013 Ridgeline models when registered and delivered between November 1st and December 2nd, 2013. Cash incentive is available for all Honda retail customers except customers who lease or finance through HFS at a subvented rate of interest offered by Honda as part of a low rate interest program. All advertised lease and finance rates are special rates. Cash incentive will be deducted from the negotiated price before taxes. For all offers: taxes payable on full amount of purchase price. Offers only valid for Ontario residents at Ontario Honda Dealers. Dealer may sell/lease for less. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Vehicles and accessories are for illustration purposes only. Offers, prices and features subject to change without notice. See your Ontario Honda Dealer or visit HondaOntario.com for full details. **Based on Association of International Automobile Manufacturers of Canada (AIAMC) data reflecting sales between 1997 and December 2012. **Based on Fuel Consumption Guide ratings from Natural Resources Canada. Transport Canada approved test methods used. Your actual fuel consumption will vary based on driving habits and other factors – use for comparison only.

Parts department

WHEELBASE MEDIA

Oily green solutions

You would never think of pouring used motor oil into your vehicle's engine, would you? Well, you might if it's NextGen motor oil from Valvoline. This product is made using 50 per cent recycled — or re-refined — oil that, according to Valvoline, is completely free of all impurities, contaminants and depleted additives, making it virtually identical to newly refined oil. However, the recycled portion takes much less energy and resources to make, which in turns reduces its impact on the environment. NextGen is available in common viscosities, all of which exceed industry specifications and standards. A U.S. quart (0.946 litres) sells for about $6 from most auto-supply and department stores. For more info on NextGen technology, go to nextgen.valvoline.com/.

Battery stays charged

If you're storing your car for lengthy periods, chances are its battery will go dead. A Save-A-Battery solar-powered battery charger/maintainer from Granite Digital prevents this from happening by keeping it charged. In addition, the product will regularly charge and discharge the battery (known as deep cycling) to maintain its life and will issue an alert if a problem with the battery occurs. It can also monitor your vehicle's entire electrical system. The product's waterproof solar panel functions in low light or cloudy conditions. Granite Digital manufactures a variety of chargers ranging from two-watt models for $100 to 12-watt units for $300 US. Check out and/or any of them at save-a-battery.com.

Travel bingo for kids

To keep the kids amused on long road trips, try turning off all their various electronic devices and start a game of Auto Bingo from Kids Love Travel.

Each reusable game card requires the player to spot different items along the journey, such as road signs, vehicle types (police car, fire truck, bus, etc,), buildings, animals and so on. And there's no need for tokens or messy markers to keep score, you just slide a tinted plastic cover over the image. Choose from traffic safety, interstate and general interest theme cards. A set of four sells for about $7. Order Auto Bingo at kidslovetravel.com.

Winter protection

Safely and securely transporting ski and/or snowboard equipment is always important. Sportube's hard-shell containers are made from high-density polyethylene and are capable of absorbing plenty of punishment, whether strapped to the roof rack of your vehicle and/or transported by other means. The Series 3 Special Edition models are among the latest in the Sportube lineup and, depending on the size selected, are built to contain up to two pairs of skis or two snowboards. Built-in wheels and a detachable tow handle are included, as is a combination cable that's approved for airline cargo and a "nic knac pak" for storing extra gear. Prices range from $170 US for the single-pair container, up to $250 for multi-pair units. Complete details and purchasing can be found at sportube.com.

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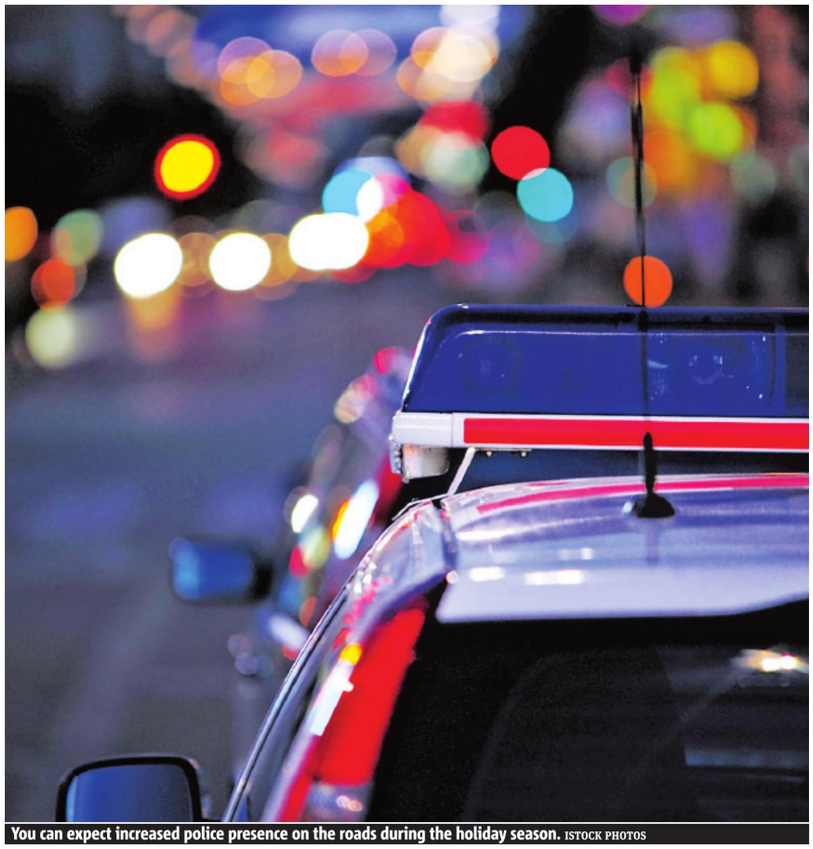

You can expect increased police presence on the roads during the holiday season. ISTOCK PHOTOS

The problem with drinking and driving is the mourning after

On the road. Before tipping back a few this holiday season, make sure you plan ahead to ensure you get home safe and sound

Keep safe and sober on the roads this season

It doesn't seem to matter how often we talk about the dangers of drinking and driving. Someone, somewhere, isn't listening.

According to statistics provided by the Ontario Provincial Police, impaired driving is the leading criminal cause of death in Canada. And sadly, arrests for impaired driving hit a year-long peak during the final weeks of the year.

For those who haven't noticed, the penalties for drinking and driving are considerably tougher, thanks to groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Even for first-time offenders, defending a drunk-driving arrest is expensive.

"Everyone recognizes that the holiday season is a great time to reconnect with family and friends and celebrate with a few drinks," says Mauro Convertini, an insurance expert at Aviva Canada. "It's important, though, to have a plan in place to get yourself and your loved ones home safely."

NEWS CANADA

Tips for season

Convertini offers some simple tips to ensure a safe and happy holiday season.

- **Plan ahead.** If you're likely to consume alcohol at an event or party, don't take your vehicle.
- **Use a designated driver.** Remember, the "least impaired" person in the room is not a designated driver.
- **Use public transit.** If this is not an option, make arrangements to spend the night if you're visiting a friend.
- **Use a taxi.** There are more than 35,000 operating in Canada.

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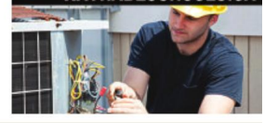

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Your critical thinking may not be as sharp as it usually is, so be careful what you allow yourself to believe. There are a lot of strange ideas in the world. You also started a few.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Quick decisions are not always good and the planets warn that you should reserve judgment on important issues unless you are absolutely sure of your stance. Even then, err on the side of caution.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Stop worrying about things over which you have no control. As the Sun moves through your opposite sign, there are a lot of things others say and do that you cannot influence. It's no big deal.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You could find yourself at a loose end today, uncertain of your next move. Who says you have to move at all? Why not let life come to you for a change. You don't have to be a go-getter all the time.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
It may be tempting to take a risk today but the planets warn you will most likely regret it. There is only one thing you can be sure of at the moment and that is you cannot really be sure of anything.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If you are smart, you will fight the impulse to take a shortcut. If you try to cut corners, you will be asking for trouble and trouble is not the kind of guest to turn down an invitation.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You need realize that some kind of scheme is not in the least bit practical. It may be a blow to your ego but there are other useful things you could be doing with your time.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If you poke your nose into a friend's personal issues you will get no thanks for it at all, no matter how well-intentioned or useful your advice may be. Some people need to learn from their own mistakes.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
There are changes taking place in your life and almost all of them are good, so go with the flow and don't be scared to move in a direction you have not been before.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
There are so many interesting things going on in the world around you that you won't be able to focus on one thing for any length of time. That's OK. Variety is needed to get your creative juices flowing.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Nothing in life stays the same for long so if something (or someone) goes out of your life over the next 24 hours, bid it a fond farewell and start looking for something better to replace it.

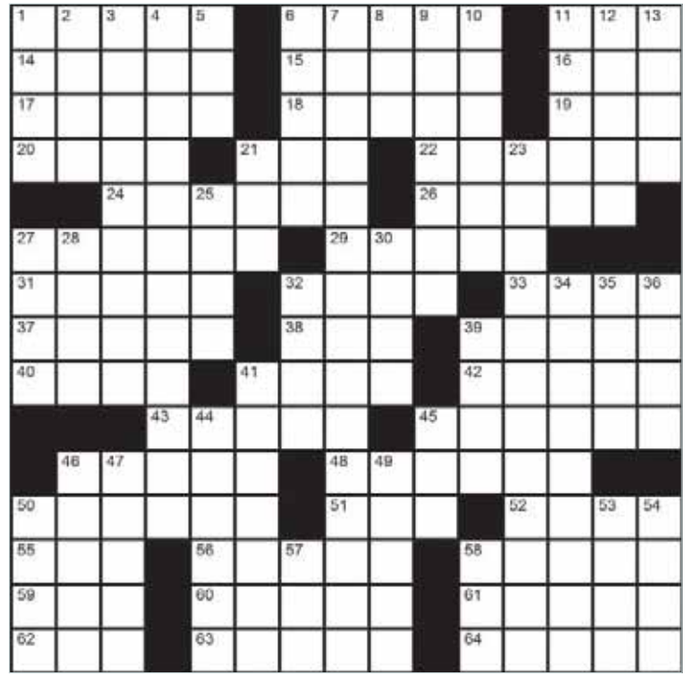
♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Work-related matters must be handled with care, especially if you are one of those Pisceans who tends to be a bit reckless in your attitude towards people in positions of power.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



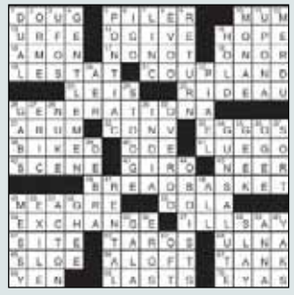
Across

1. Posh title
6. Much, slangy-ly
11. Hat
14. Trees: White poplar
15. Off-Broadway theatrical awards
16. Have payments
17. Bungle
18. Prescription warning, __ __ directed
19. Campaigned
20. Paving stone
21. Perish
22. Newfoundland's official bird, Atlantic __
24. Way out there
26. "Indoors __ __?" (Summer eater's query)
27. Drenched: 2 wds.
29. Ballotings
31. Ms. Rimes
32. Siestas
33. Fasten to the bulletin board
37. Do the tango
38. Mel of baseball
39. Capital of India, New __
40. Mr. Hershiser
41. "Je ne __ quoi."
42. Remixer/producer, William __
43. Prefix to 'dontist' (Braces giver)
45. Horrified
46. __-_ _ agent (Former employee at The Company)
48. Famous casino in Las Vegas, Golden __
50. Country star Dwight
51. CSI evidence
52. Saran __
55. Keyboard key
56. Country classic: "By the __ _ Get to Phoenix"
58. LED = Light-Emitting __
59. Plum part
60. Put on __ __ (Fake it)
61. __ __ in the air (That's still uncertain)
62. Ski hill machine, __-Cat
63. Big bags
64. Sailing: 2 wds.

Down

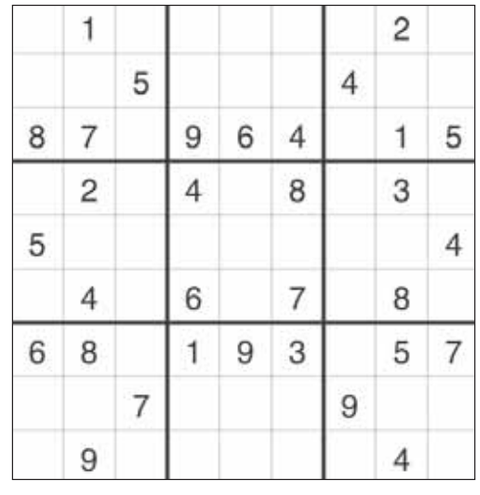
1. Chef Emeril Lagasse's sounds!
2. Classic comic strip, __ the Agent
3. Dermatology: Type of injectable filler
4. Functional landmark in Halifax since 1803: 3 wds.
5. Modern
6. 1963 The Kingsmen hit, when doubled
7. Calgary Tower's dazzling rotating feature: 2 wds.
8. Fasten
9. Some spouts spots
10. Guarantee
11. 1921: Greek island where Prince Philip was born
12. Expect
13. Sean of movies
21. Banned pesticide
23. Canadian hockey play-by-play broadcasting legend, b.1902 - d.1985: 2 wds.
25. Reality star Ms. Leakes
27. Canadian shoe store
28. Shakespeare tragedy, King __
30. Selects
32. Mr. Wyle
34. Seabird
35. Vitalities
36. "Knight Rider" car
39. Actor/rapper, Snoop __
41. Endurance
44. Lariats
45. Title in Turkey
46. Reddish-rose dye
47. _-__ knife
49. Segments
50. Slangy positives
53. _ __ (Together, in music)
54. "Shoop" by Salt-n-__
57. Fleetwood __
58. Wee width

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

8	2	5	1	9	3	7	4	6
4	3	1	5	6	7	2	9	8
6	7	9	8	2	4	5	1	3
7	5	4	2	3	8	9	6	1
2	1	8	9	5	6	3	7	4
9	6	3	4	7	1	8	2	5
1	4	7	3	8	2	6	5	9
5	8	2	6	1	9	4	3	7
3	9	6	7	4	5	1	8	2

Today
0°/-6°
Flurries

Thursday
-3°/-9°
Variable

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